

# SPACED OUT

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PRINT  
MINT



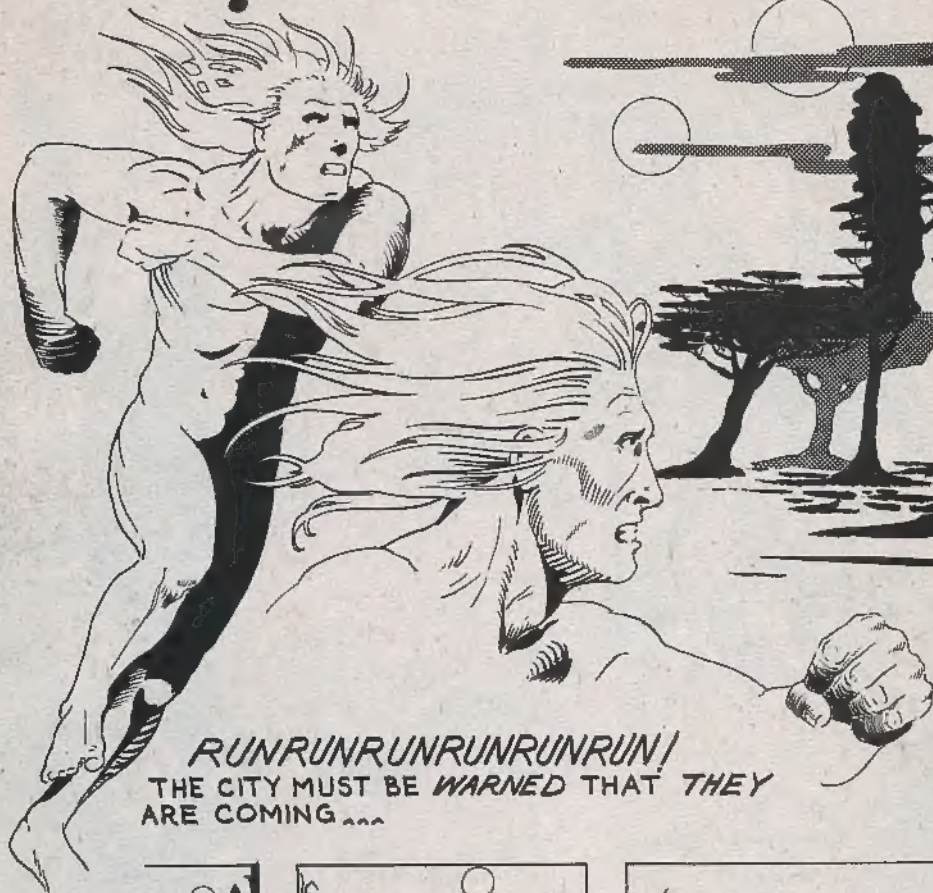




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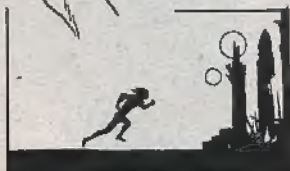


# RUN!



**RUNRUNRUNRUNRUNRUN!**  
THE CITY MUST BE WARNED THAT *THEY*  
ARE COMING...

↑BIRD



...PAST CITIES ALREADY  
LOOTED BEHIND BRO-  
KEN WALLS...



...THROUGH A BOG...ALL  
THAT REMAINS OF ONCE  
MIGHTY CANALS...



...THERE! AT LAST! BEYOND  
THOSE MOULDY RUINS, GLOWS  
*SHA-LA-LEE*...CITY OF LIGHT!



LAST CITADEL OF A DY-  
ING RACE...OF CULTURE  
ON A DYING PLANET...

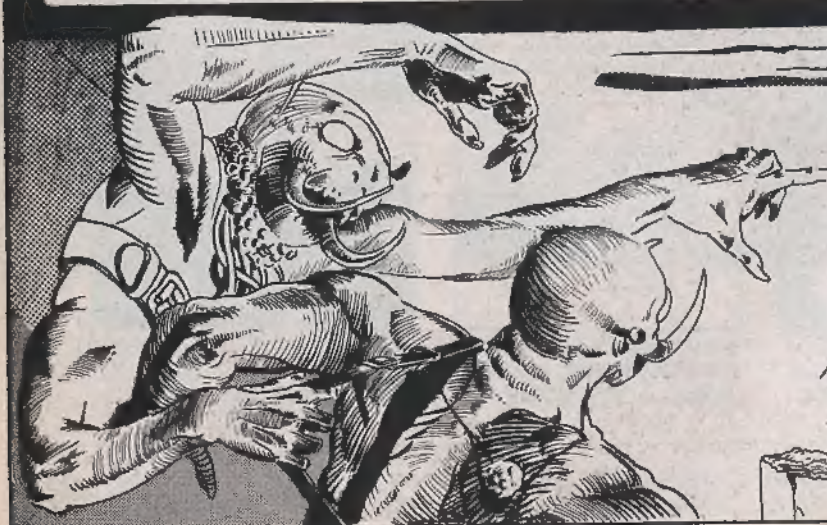
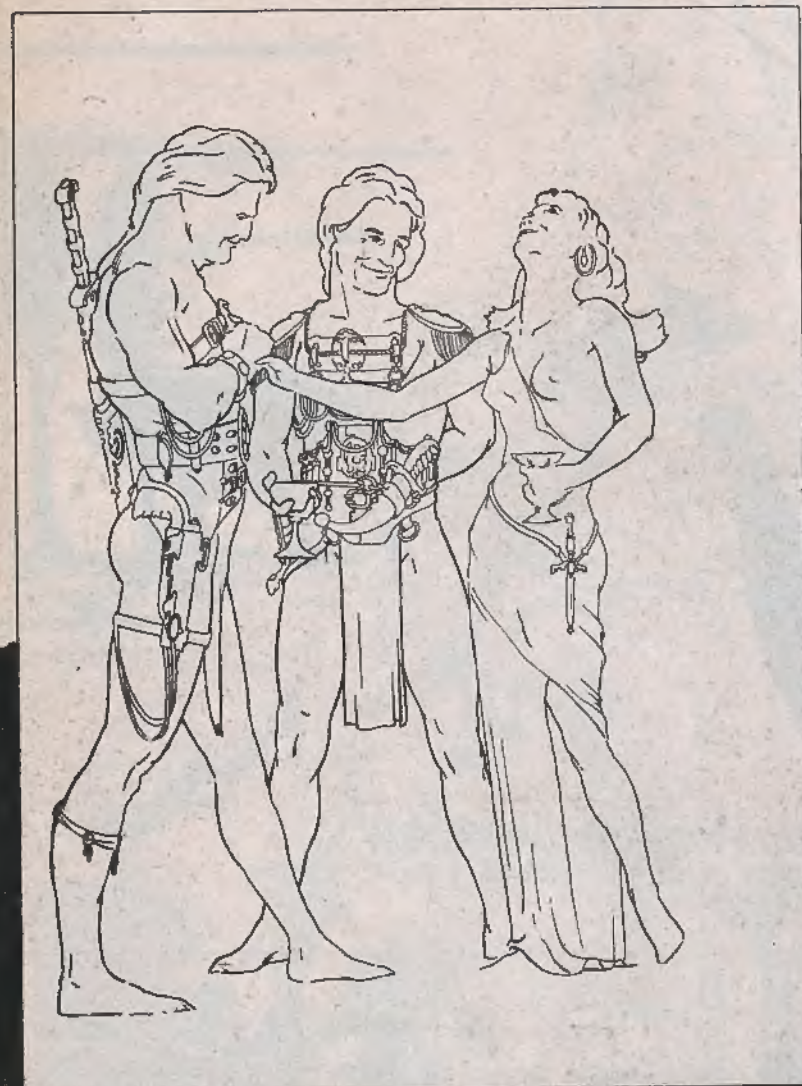


WAIT! WHAT WAS THAT?  
A NOISE, THERE IN THE  
RUINS... *OH, GODS!*



...AND THERE, AMONG THE  
RUBBLE, *THEY* AWAITED  
HIM. HE WAS TOO LATE.

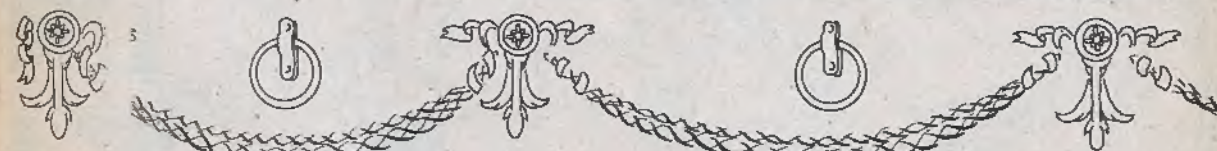
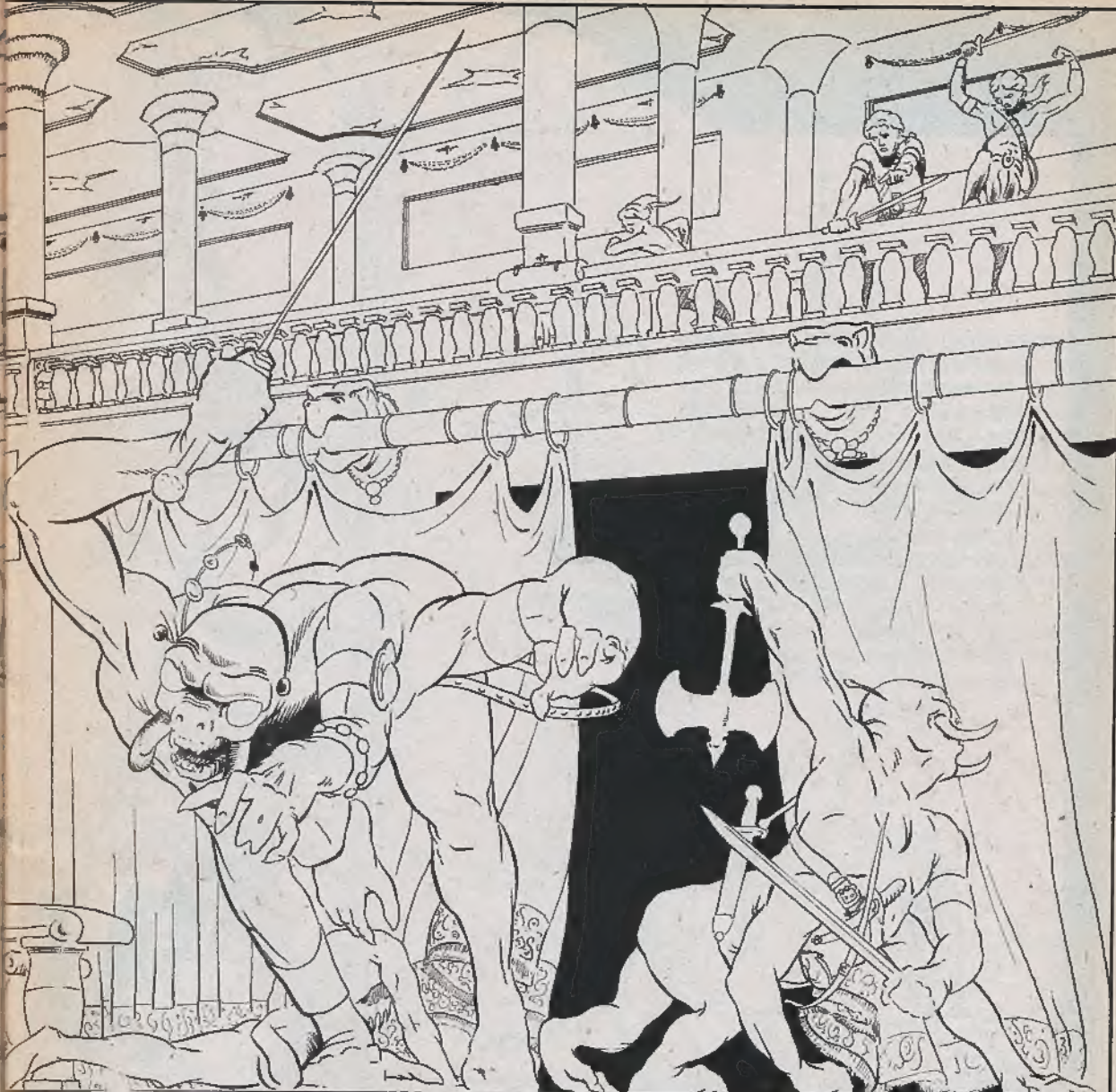
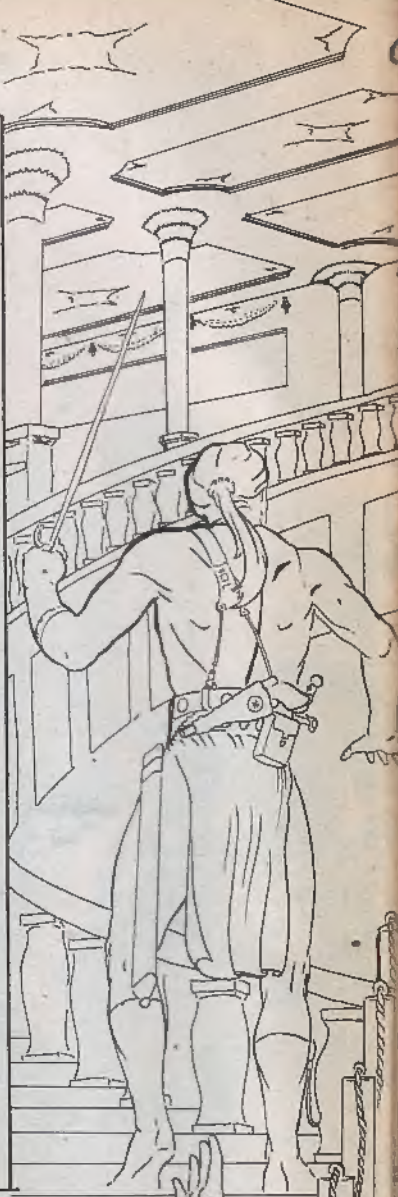
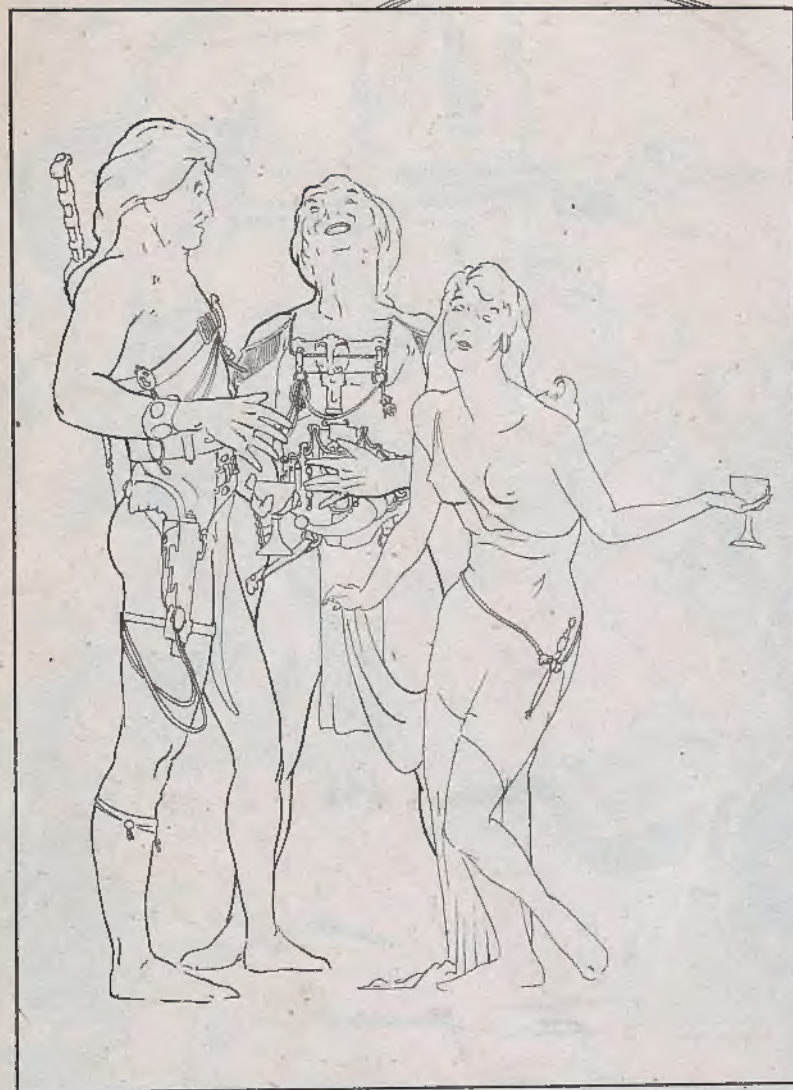




TOO LATE...TO WARN THE GLEAMING CITY'S INHABITANTS OF THE SIX-  
 LIMBED, TUSKED BARBARIANS SURROUNDING THEM...OF THE *MORDUL*...WHOSE ONLY  
 EXPRESSED PURPOSE IN LIFE WAS THE DESTRUCTION, YEA! THE *TOTAL ANI-*  
*HILATION!* OF THE PLANET'S ONCE-DOMINANT SPECIES. *MORDUL* HORDES  
 HAD GATHERED FROM FAR ACROSS DEAD-SEA BOTTOMS TO PUT OUT THE LIGHTS OF  
*SHA-LA-LEE* FOREVER. AND AS THE RUNNER DIED, STUPIFYINGLY INDOLENT  
 ARISTOCRATS CELEBRATE AN OBSCURE FESTIVAL WHILE A WORLD, *THEIR WORLD...* WAS DYING.

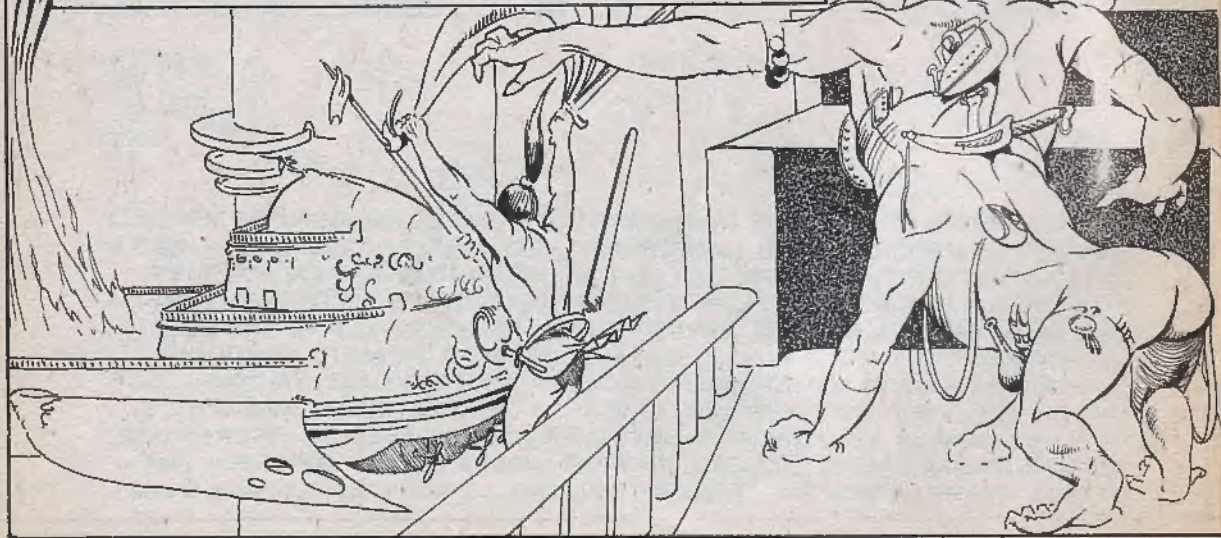
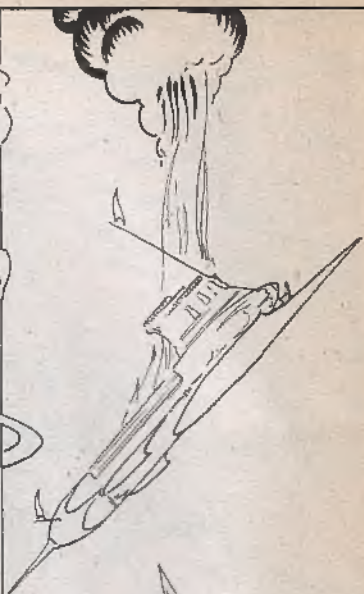




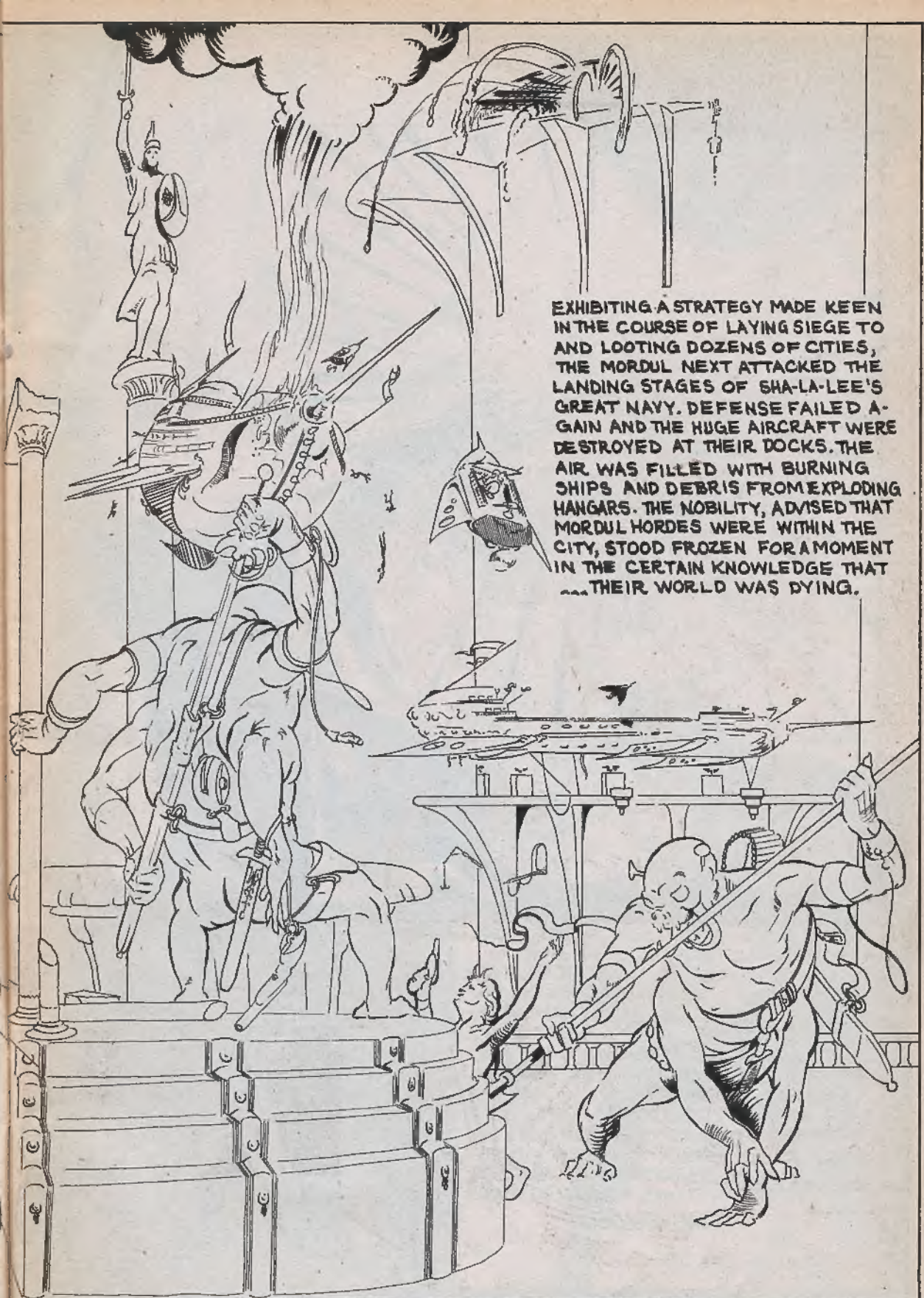


THEY JOKED, THEY LAUGHED AND WERE WITTY, THOSE NOBLES IN BEJWELED HARNESS AS HORROR SEETHED UNDER THEM. MORDUL SHOCK-TROOPS CAPTURED A GATE WITHOUT OUTCRY. THEIR ANCIENT HATREDS MAKING THEM EFFICIENT, THEY IMMEDIATELY STORMED THE ELITE GUARD BARRACKS... A STRUCTURE SO SUMPTUOUS AS TO BE A PALACE. THE GUARDS RUSHED, MANY BUT HALF ACCOUTERED, TO WITNESS THE UNBELIEVABLE CATASTROPHE OF MORDUL WARRIORS SLAYING WITH THEIR ACCUSTOMED FEROCITY WITHIN THE SANCTIFIED WALLS OF SHA-LA-LEE. THEIR DEFENSE WAS, LIKE THEIR CULTURE, BRAVE AND FUTILE. THEY HAD NEARLY ALL PERISHED BEFORE SURVIVORS FLED TO INFORM THE FESTIVE GENERALS, THE LEADERS, THAT THE IMPOSSIBLE HAD HAPPENED: SHA-LA-LEE WAS PENETRATED... PERHAPS FALLING... THEIR WORLD WAS DYING









EXHIBITING A STRATEGY MADE KEEN IN THE COURSE OF LAYING SIEGE TO AND LOOTING DOZENS OF CITIES, THE MORDUL NEXT ATTACKED THE LANDING STAGES OF SHA-LA-LEE'S GREAT NAVY. DEFENSE FAILED AGAIN AND THE HUGE AIRCRAFT WERE DESTROYED AT THEIR DOCKS. THE AIR WAS FILLED WITH BURNING SHIPS AND DEBRIS FROM EXPLODING HANGARS. THE NOBILITY, ADVISED THAT MORDUL HORDES WERE WITHIN THE CITY, STOOD FROZEN FOR A MOMENT IN THE CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE THAT THEIR WORLD WAS DYING.

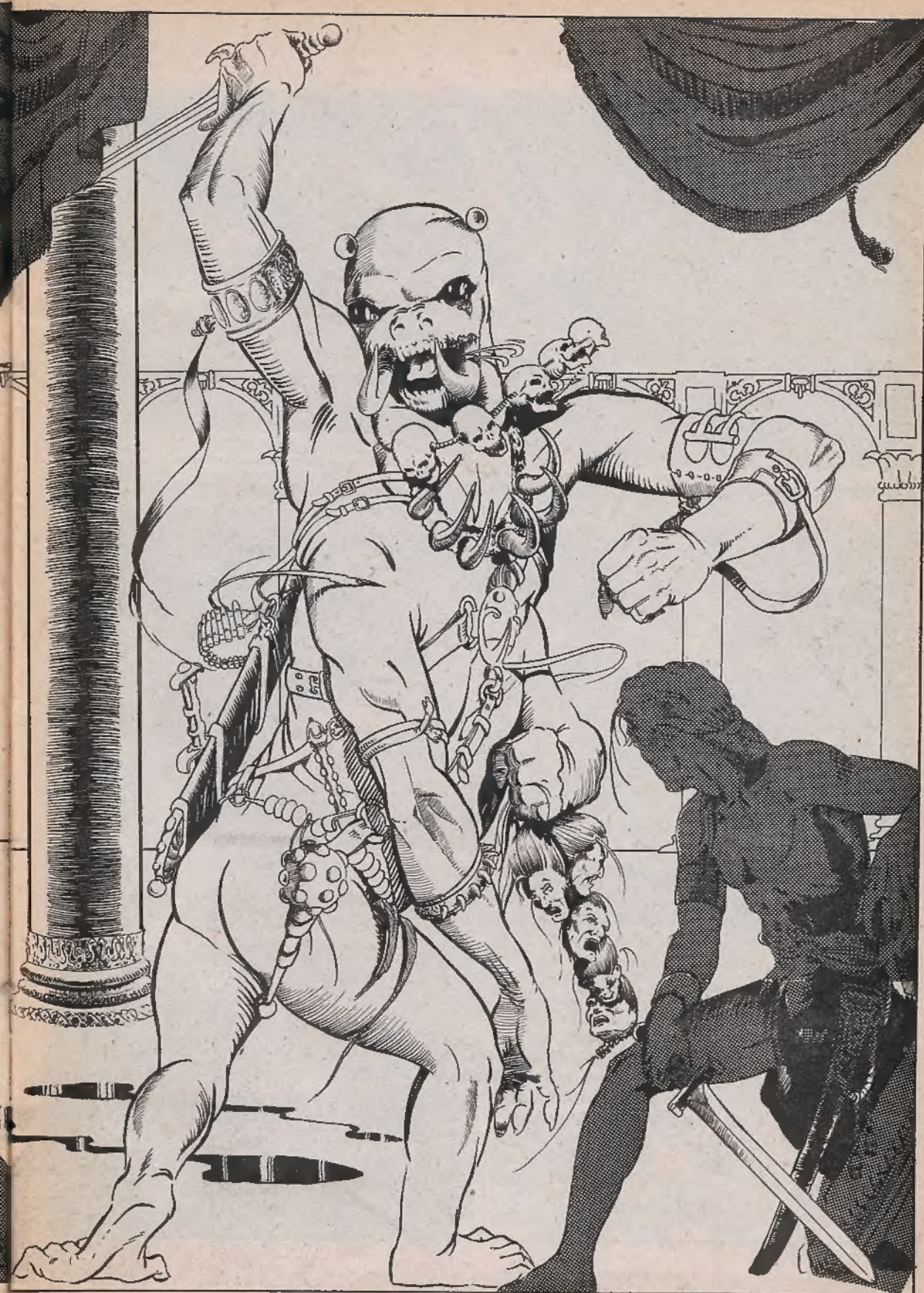




THE AIRSHIPS NO LONGER EXISTED, THE IMPOSING PALACES WERE AFLAME... MORDUL WARRIORS HAD RIDDEN THEIR HUGE MOUNTS INTO THE HALLS OF THE FESTIVALS WHERE THEY EXTERMINATED THE ARISTOCRACY... THEY REVELED IN THE CENTRAL COURTS, WAR GIRL AND BANGLED AS GUARDSMEN, TOO EXHAUSTED TO FIGHT ANY LONGER, LOOKED ON, AGHAST. MOST IMPORTANTLY, NO HERDES CAME TO SAVE THE DAY... NOR WERE THERE SURVIVORS ENOUGH TO ULTIMATELY REVENGE AND REBUILD... THERE WAS NOTHING... IT WAS OVER, EXTINGUISHED — IT WAS MERELY AND WHOLLY

**THE END**

...WORLDS DO DIE



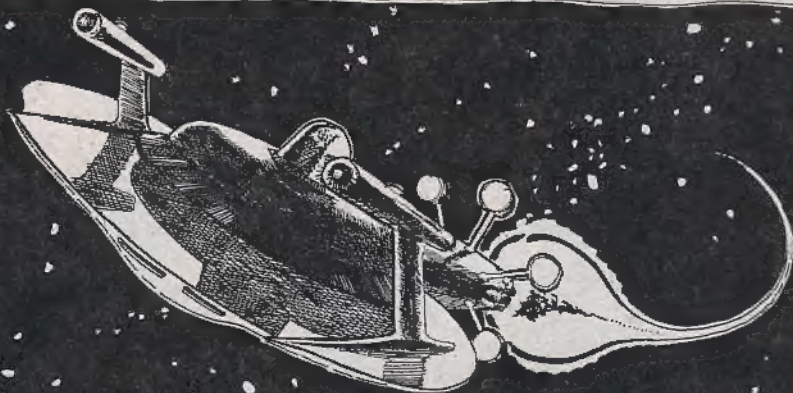


SOMEWHERE IN SPACE

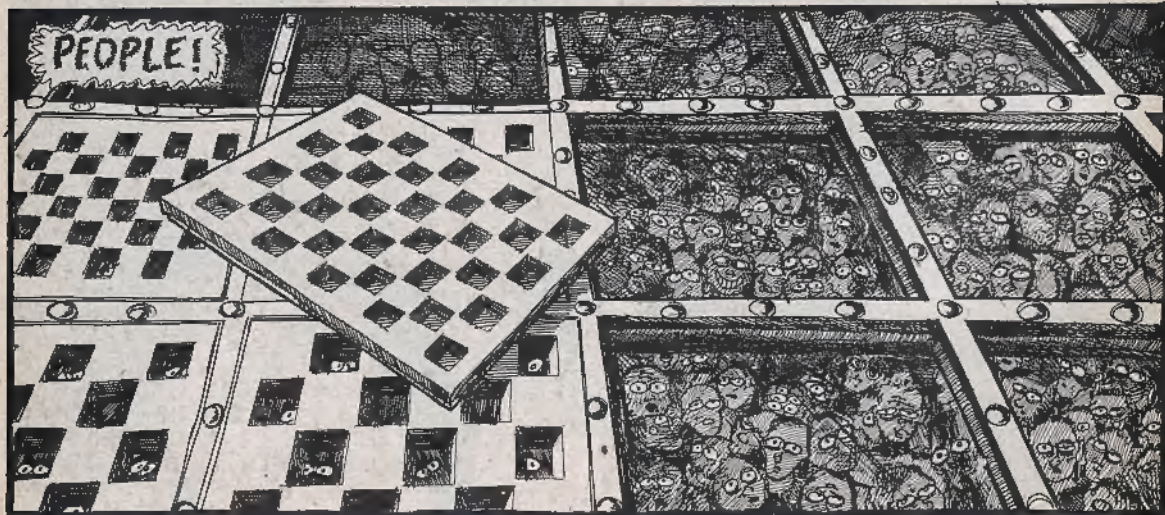


AN INTERGALACTIC VEHICLE! DESTINATION, UNKNOWN!

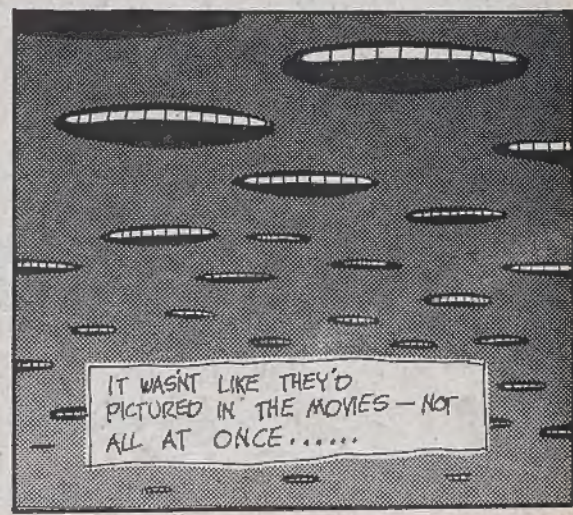
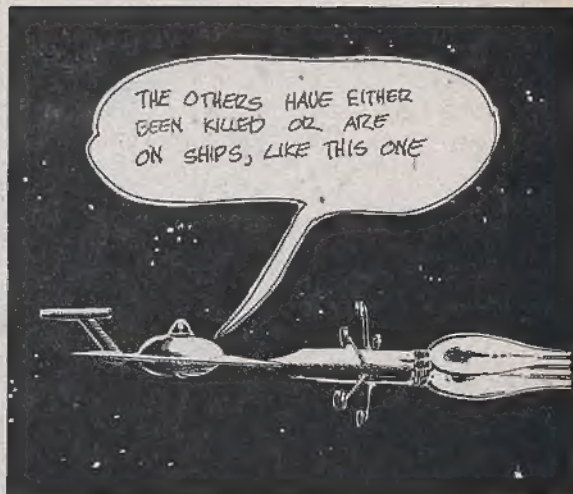
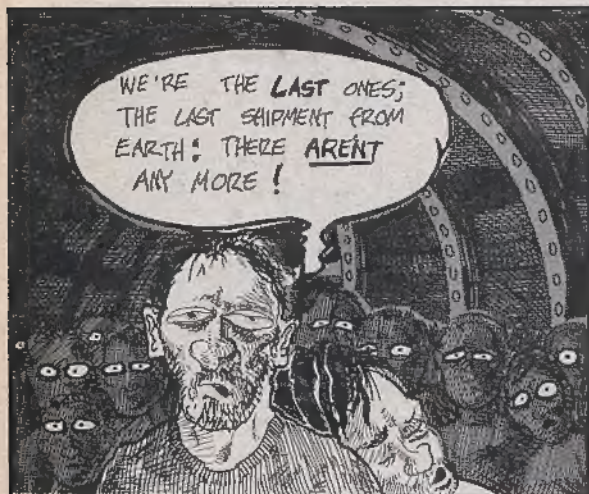
BUT THIS IS NO ORDINARY EVERYDAY SPACESHIP, FOR IN ITS HOLD IS A SPECIAL CARGO



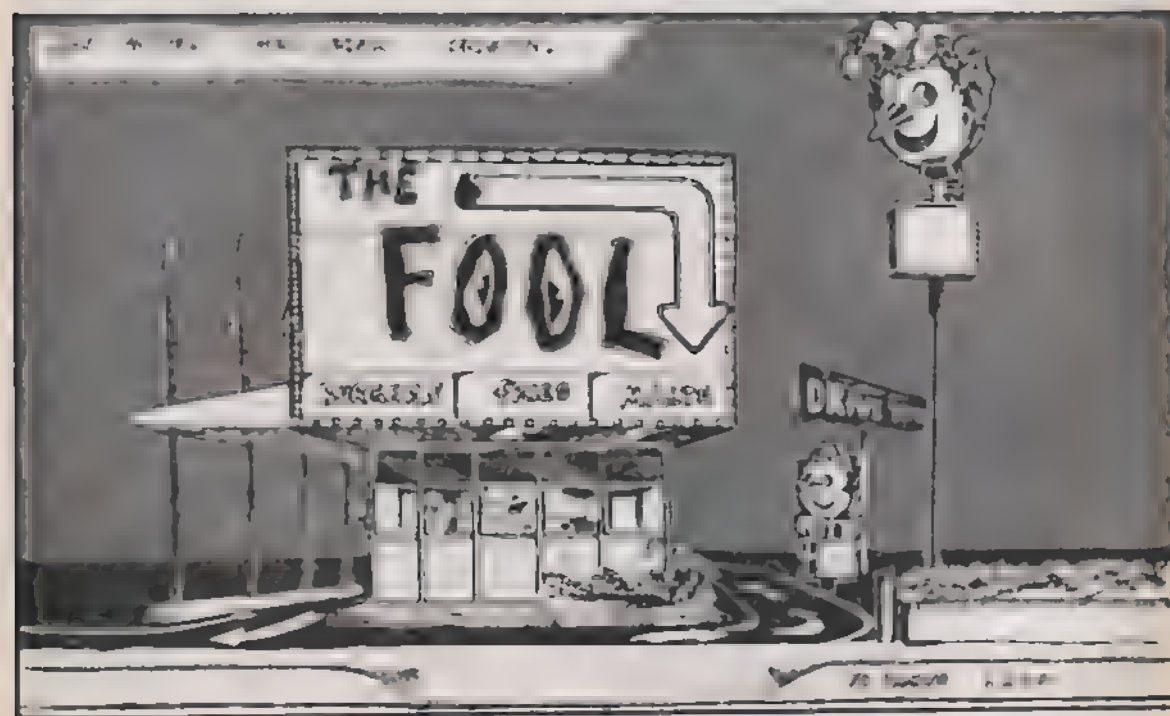
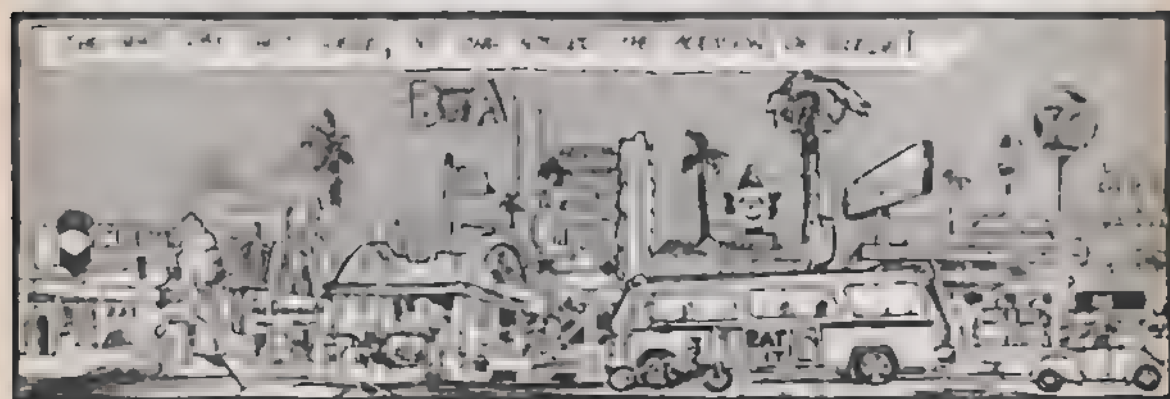
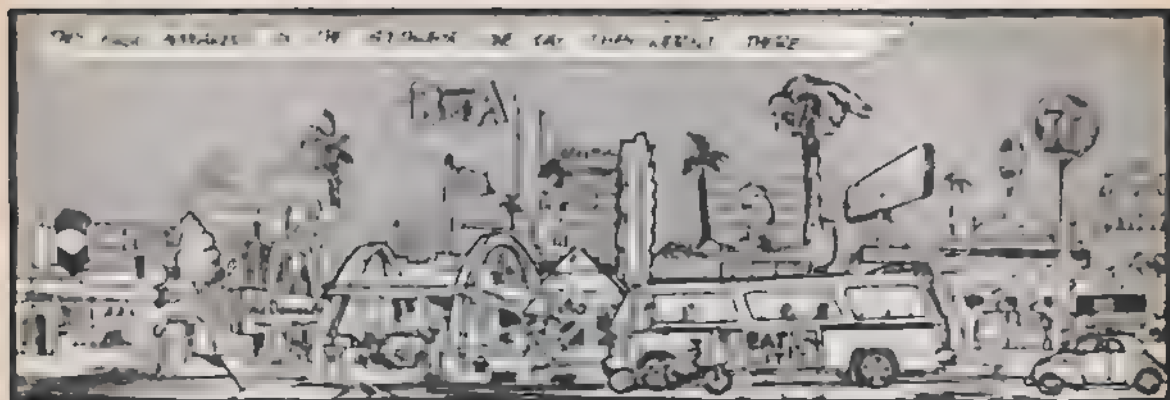
PEOPLE!





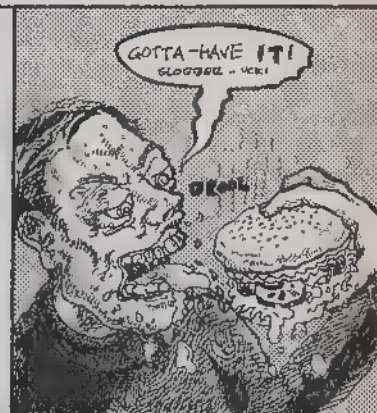
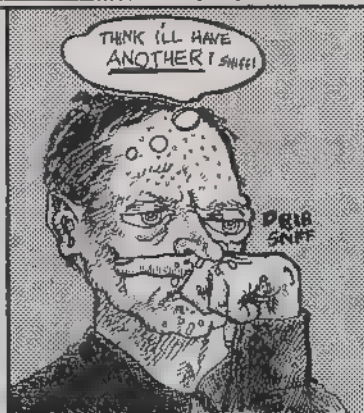
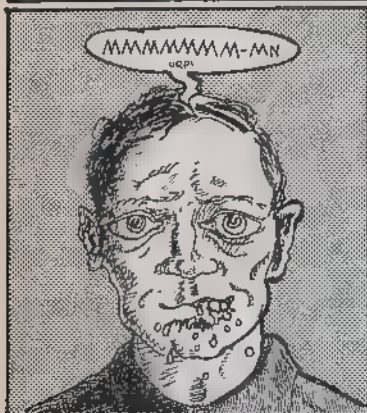




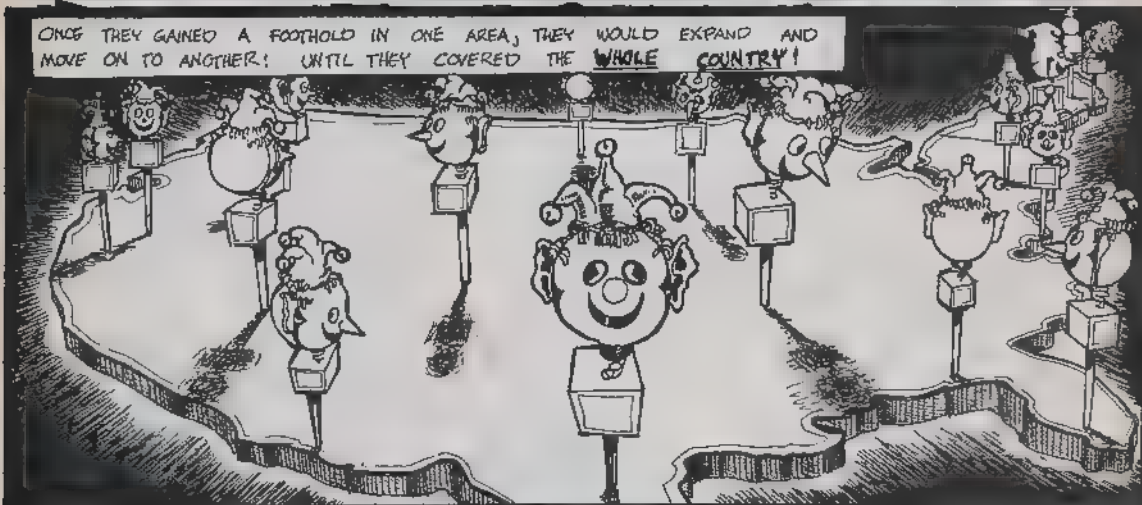




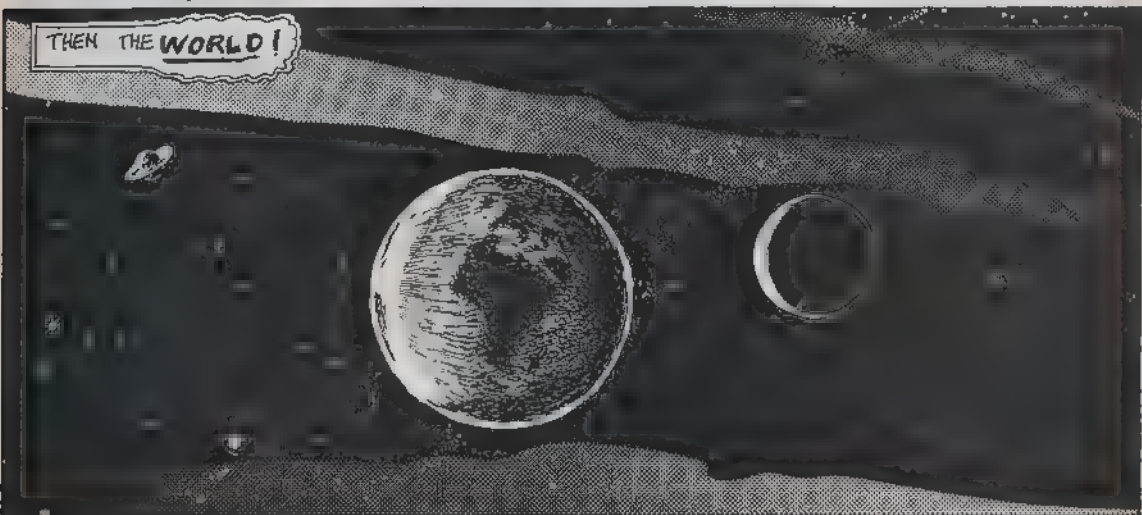
THERE WAS SOMETHING IRRESISTIBLE ABOUT FOOL-FOOD: THE MORE YOU ATE,  
THE MORE YOU HAD TO HAVE!



ONCE THEY GAINED A FOOTHOLD IN ONE AREA, THEY WOULD EXPAND AND  
MOVE ON TO ANOTHER! UNTIL THEY COVERED THE WHOLE COUNTRY!



THEN THE WORLD!

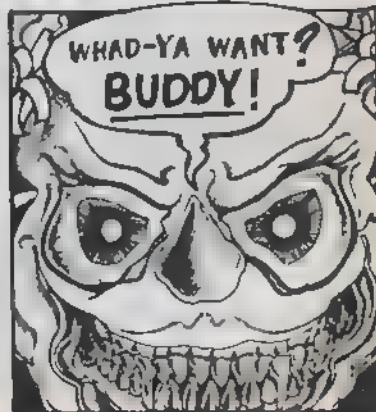
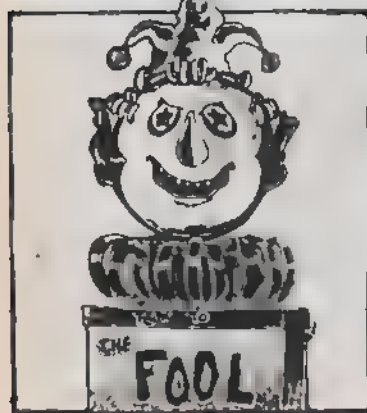




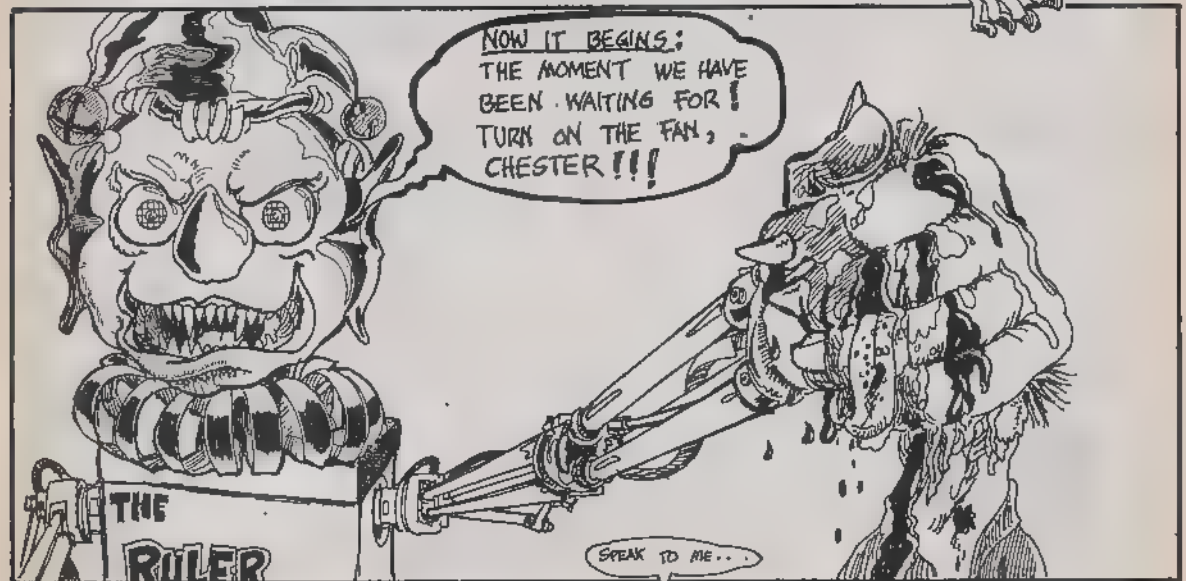
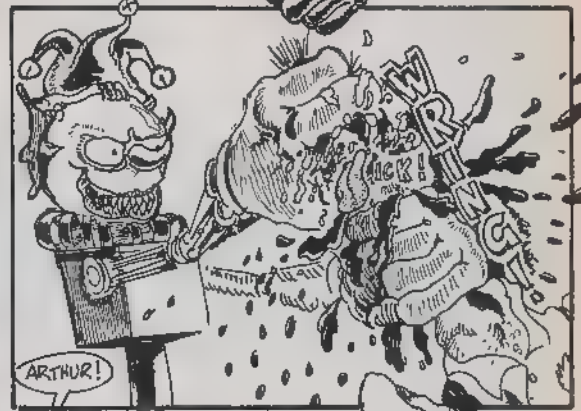
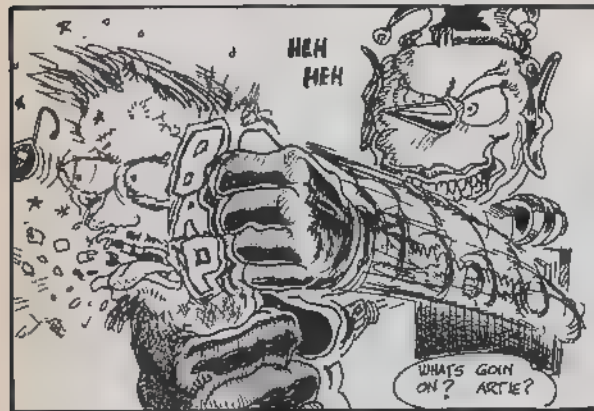
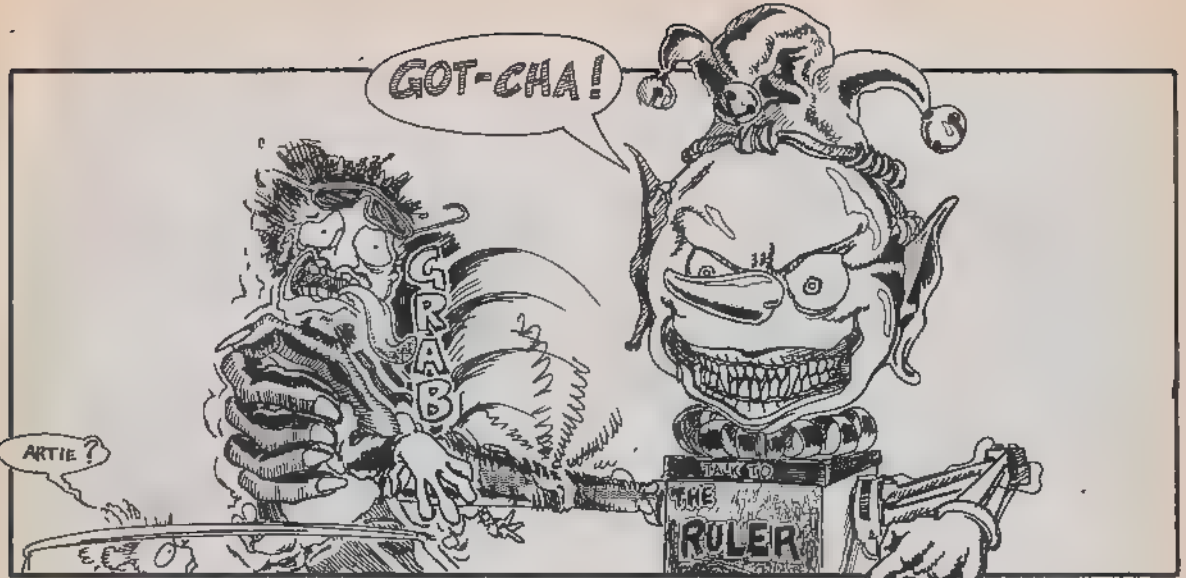
WHEREVER YOU LOOKED THERE WERE LONG LINES LEADING TO A FOOL DRIVE-IN. . . .



THEN ONE DAY









AND SO IT BEGAN: EVERYWHERE THERE WERE FOOLS WHO HAD SUDDENLY ATTAINED GIGANTIC PROPORTIONS, THROUGH SOME STRANGE METAMORPHOSIS . . .

THEY COULD BE SEEN SCOURING THE COUNTRYSIDE, GATHERING UP THE MINDLESS AND ELIMINATING THE FEW WHO WERE STILL ABLE TO RESIST . . .



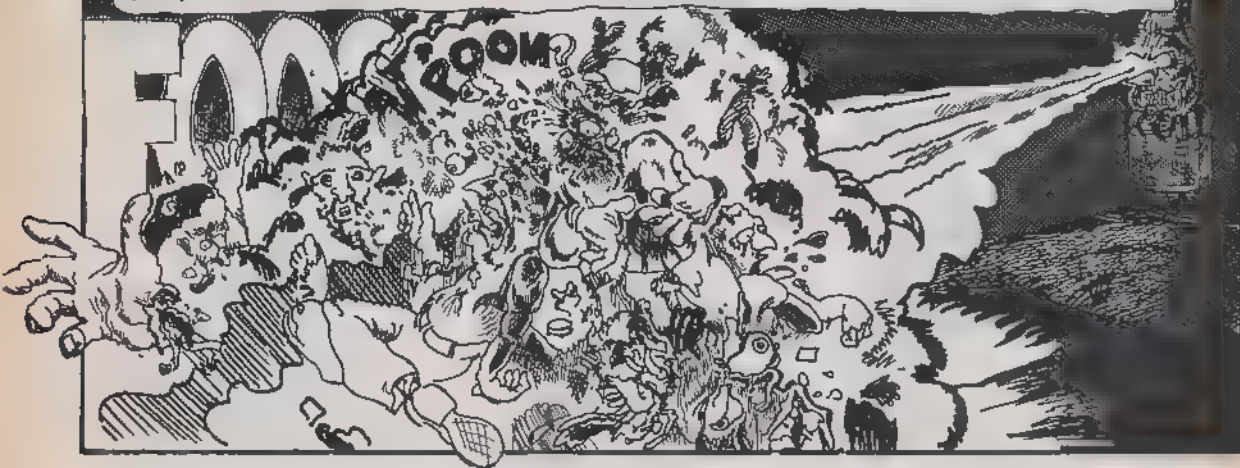
SOME PEOPLE, OF COURSE, HADN'T EATEN FOOL FOOD AND FALLEN PREY TO THE MINDLESS-STATE IT BROUGHT ABOUT . . .



BUT!

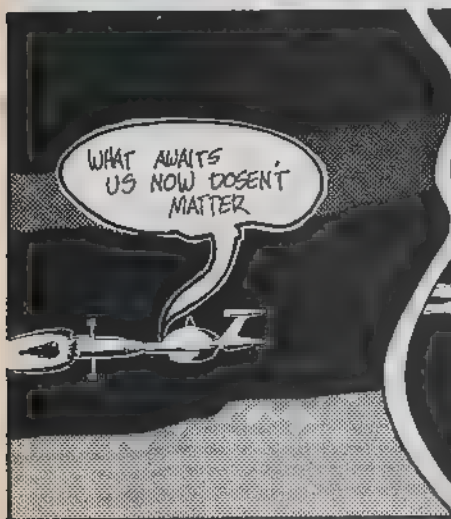
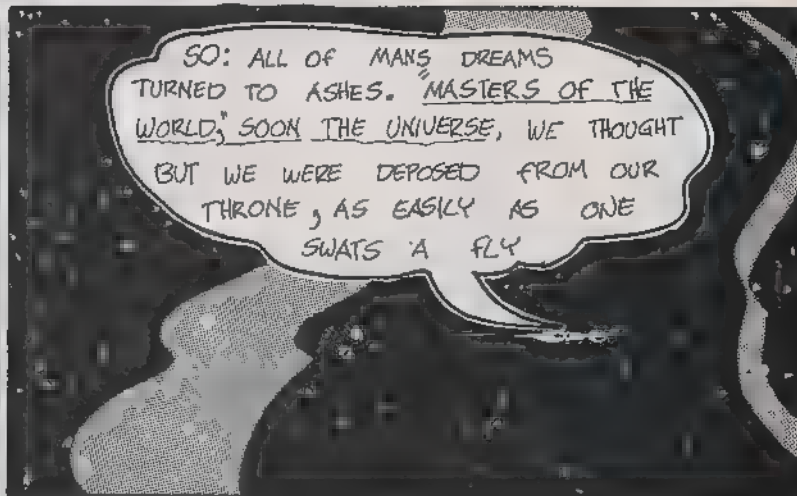
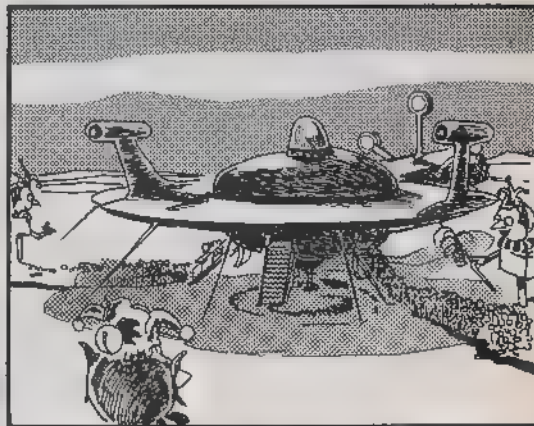


THEY; THE ONLY ONES CAPABLE OF ANY RESISTANCE WERE SYSTEMATICALLY DEALT WITH . . .





UNTIL; THE ONLY ONES LEFT WERE THE MINDLESS IDIOTS, INCAPABLE OF ANY RESISTANCE, CAPABLE ONLY OF OBEYING. ROUNDING THEM UP AND HERDING THEM TO CARGO SHIPS WAS SIMPLE...





# PROLOGUE

THIS TALE IS OF A TIME THAT IS OF YET STILL FAR AWAY, A TIME OF MAN'S FUTURE. ONE THAT VERY WELL MIGHT BE AWAITING HIM, SOMEWHERE... MAN HAS EXPANDED HIS CAPABILITIES TO USE HIS MIND FAR BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES THAT EXIST FOR US. WE ARE ONLY BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND. IF YOU COULD SEE OUR WORLD OF THIS FUTURE AGE, ONE WOULD SEE A PARADISE ON EARTH...

SPACE EXPLORATION HAS COME TO MAN. LIFE HAS BEEN FOUND ON OTHER WORLDS. MAN HAD OVERCOME THE TURMOIL UPON HIS HOME PLANET, AND FOUND HIMSELF READY TO LEAVE HIS CRIB, TAKE THOSE FIRST CHILDISH STEPS AND EXPLORE FOR TRUTH...

AS THE RACE AGED, GREW WISER, THE ABILITY TO ACCEPT LARGER TRUTHS WAS THEIRS. AND THEY RECEIVED THESE TRUTHS...

SO THIS IS THE TIME OF THIS TALE, THIS FANTASY. WITH ALL HIS KNOWLEDGE, MAN WILL LEARN THAT ALTHOUGH HE UNDERSTANDS MUCH, HE WILL DISCOVER HE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND ALL! PERISH THE THOUGHT!...





*THE  
STORY:*

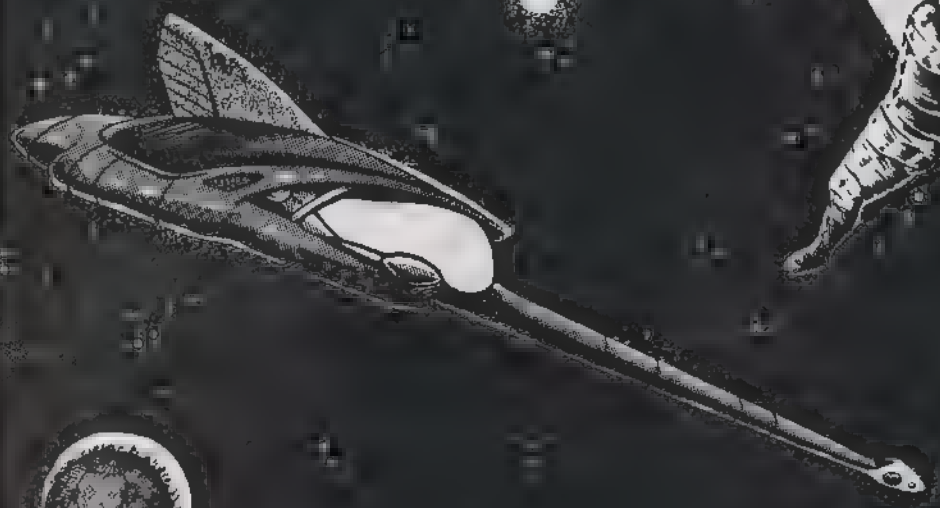
WEEKS  
EARLIER  
THE  
CRAFT  
WAS  
IN THE  
EMPTYNESS  
OF SPACE.

THERE  
IS NO  
MERCY  
GRANTED  
FOR  
MISTAKES  
MADE IN  
THIS  
FRONTIER,  
AND  
DEATH  
IS AN  
EVER  
PRESENT  
WRATH!

*IT STRUCK!*

ADDAM  
WAS NOW  
ALONE...

# PERISH the THOUGHT



Jim  
PINKOSKI



BOREDOM COMES QUICKLY WHEN THERE IS NO ONE TO TALK WITH. TO BREAK THIS, ADDAM DIRECTED HIS CRAFT TO THE CLOSEST WORLD. OUT OF GRATITUDE HE NAMED THIS PLANET MANAVATION...

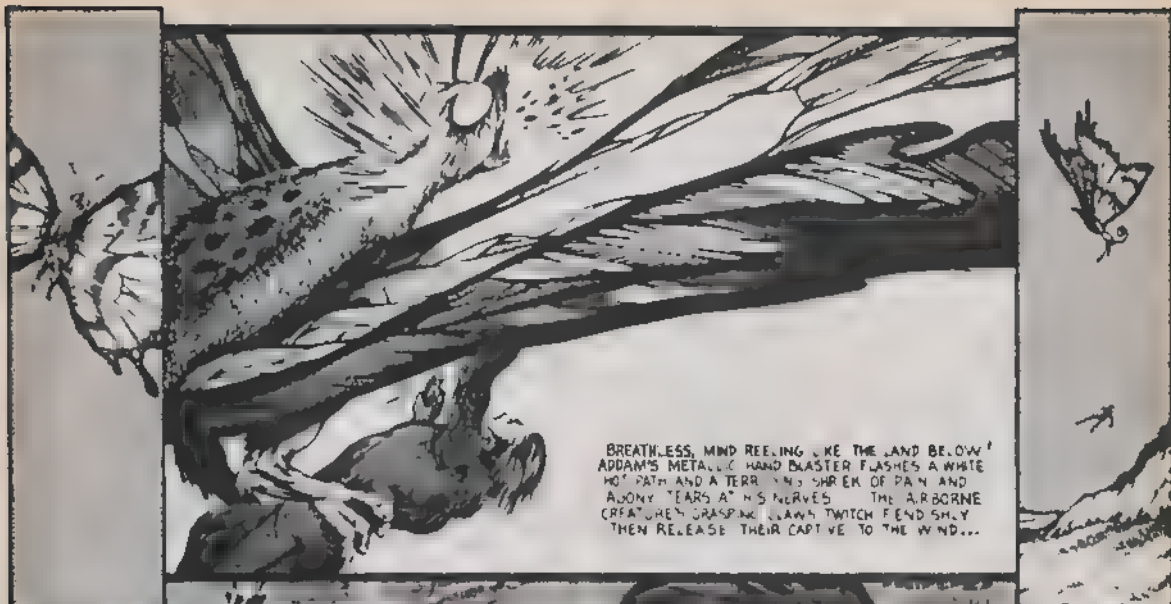
A MAN'S SALVATION--

A PRESENT FROM GOD--

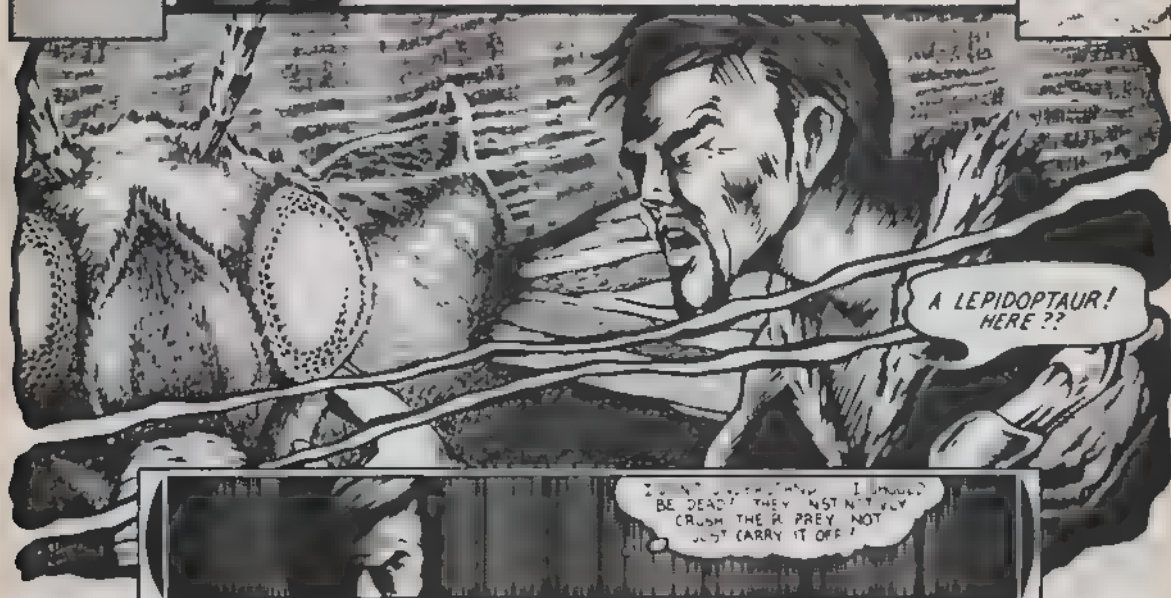
ADDAM SETS OUT-- ACROSS WIDE MEADOWS SWAYING GENTLY IN THE SOFT BREEZE, SPOTTED WITH FLURISHING BUSHES, COLOSSAL KNOTTED TREES AND ODD ROCK FORMATIONS...







BREATHLESS, MIND REELING LIKE THE LAND BELOW!  
ADDAM'S METALLIC HAND BLASTER FLASHES A WHITE  
HOT PATH AND A TERRIFYING SHRIEK OF PAIN AND  
AGONY TEARS AT HIS NERVES. THE AIRBORNE  
CREATURE'S GRASPING CLAWS TWITCH FENDS AWAY  
THEN RELEASE THEIR CAPTIVE TO THE WIND...



A LEPIDOPTAUR!  
HERE??

DO NOT WORRY, THEY SHOULD  
BE DEAD! THEY MUST NOT  
CRUSH THE PREY, NOT  
JUST CARRY IT OFF!

THE INSPECTIVE  
JOURNEY CONTINUES,  
AND ADDAM  
MAKES MENTAL  
NOTES OF THE  
PLANT LIFE,  
THE ANIMALS,  
THE OVER ALL  
COMPOSITION,  
AND HOW  
THIS WORLD  
REMINDS HIM  
OF A REALITY  
OF LONG AGO--  
ONE HE CALLED  
HOME...







WHO-- WHO ARE YOU?  
I MEAN -- HOW DID  
YOU GET HERE?

I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN  
HERE, ADDAM.



A CITY -- IT LOOKED  
EXACTLY LIKE --  
LIKE ONE WHERE  
I'VE COME FROM --  
EXACTLY! BUT  
IT COULDN'T  
BE HERE --!

THEN IT  
IS NOT.

IT'S GONE!



STAY AWAY -- STAY  
AWAY FROM ME, WHATEVER  
YOU ARE!

I'M HERE TO HELP  
YOU, ADDAM.

NO! YOU'RE  
NOT REAL!

DURING THAT FRACTION  
OF A SECOND THAT  
ADDAM BLINKS,  
THE GIRL'S FORM VANISHES...





THE SHIP -- WAIT!  
COULD THAT BE REAL? YES,  
IT HAS TO BE! BUT HOW CAN I TELL??  
EVERYTHING'S THE SAME, EVERY DETAIL --  
SO WERE THOSE OTHER THINGS!

BUT THEY WERE FIGMENTS  
OF MY IMAGINATION, NOT REAL,  
THEY VANISHED WHEN --

HA, HA! WHATTA  
POWER THE  
OLD MAN'S GOT!

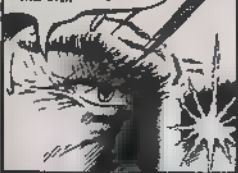
YOU'RE  
NOT REAL  
EITHER!

I THINK I UNDERSTAND. MOST OF THOSE THINGS  
WERE CREATED BY SOMETHING THAT TAPPED  
MY MIND -- THE LEPIDOPTAUR,  
THE CITY, THE  
GIRL!

I CONTROLLED  
THEM!  
SUBCONSCIOUSLY  
I WILLED ALL  
OF THEM INTO  
BEING, AND  
COMMANDING THEM  
TO VANISH!



BUT I HAVEN'T  
KNOWINGLY CREATED  
ANYTHING YET--  
CAN I DO IT?  
COULD I RECREATE  
THE SHIP--?



THIS IS UTTERLY FANTASTIC! I--I'VE  
ACQUIRED THE POWER OF MIND OVER  
MATTER--! THIS IS ALMOST UNREAL--



BUT IT WAS REAL. MAN NOW FACED HIS NEXT BIG EVOLUTIONARY  
STEP. THE ULTIMATE CREATOR HAD MADE THIS ONE SPECK IN THE  
GALAXY, THIS PLANET, TO BE HIS SUPREME GIFT TO MAN. THE  
UNIQUE SEMI-LIFE FORCE WITHIN THE PLANET WAS THERE TO GRANT  
MAN HIS EVERY WISH, EVERY DESIRE, AS HE WANTED IT...

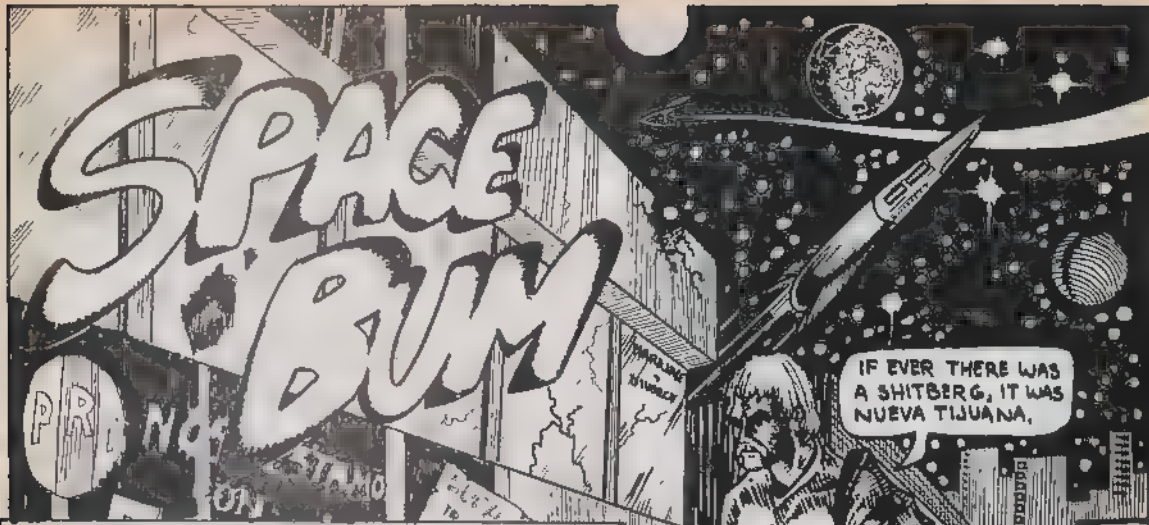


HA, HA! THIS IS CRAZY!  
THINGS APPEAR OUT OF  
NOWHERE, THINGS  
DISAPPEAR -- WAIT!  
EVERYTHING'S  
SO PERFECT-- WHAT  
IF THIS WERE MY  
AFTERWORLD, MY  
HEAVEN? THAT WOULD  
MEAN I ALSO DIED  
IN THAT SPACE  
ACCIDENT! YES, I  
DIED-- NOW I'M  
DEAD-- YEAH--

DEAD!

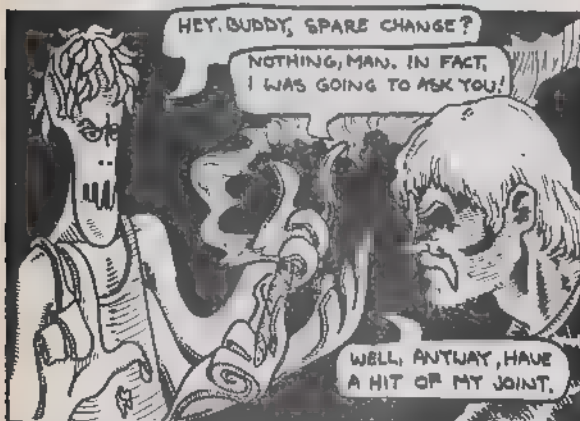
A HUSH FALLS OVER THE PLANET, AND A FEELING OF UNHAPPINESS AND FAILURE  
FILLS THE AIR. DEEP INSIDE THE WORLD A LIFE FORCE REGRETS. APPARENTLY  
MAN COULD NOT FATHOM THIS GIFT, NOR WAS HE READY FOR IT...





IF EVER THERE WAS  
A SHITBERG, IT WAS  
NUEVA TIJUANA.

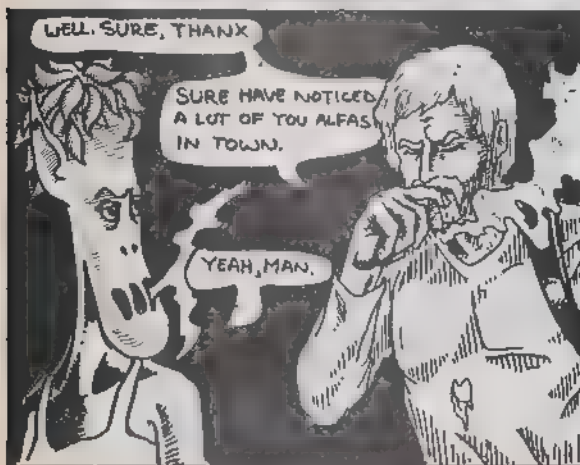
SAGITARIUS ALEXANDER IS A TYPICAL SPACE BUM. HE HAD LIVED HIS FIRST EIGHTEEN YEARS IN A HEAVY GRAVITY FARMWORLD COLONY BEFORE HE TOOK TO THE GALACTIC ROAD, WORKING, HITCHING, MAKING HIS WAY FROM PLANET TO WORLD. NOW HE HAS COME TO A DEAD END ON MEXIMUNDO, IN THE CHIEF SPACEPORT OF THAT WORLD, NUEVA TIJUANA. IT IS A DARK ROUGH TOWN AND A HARD ONE TO GET OUT OF, AT LEAST GOING UP. HE HAS BEEN STUCK HERE FOR A MONTH GOING TO THE SPACEPORT EVERY DAY AND ASKING THE SHIPS THAT COME IN IF HE CAN WORK HIS PASSAGE ANYWHERE, WITH NO LUCK, NOW HIS MONEY HAS FINALLY RUN OUT.



HEY, BUDDY, SPARE CHANGE?

NOTHING, MAN. IN FACT,  
I WAS GOING TO ASK YOU!

WELL, ANYWAY, HAVE  
A HIT OF MY JOINT.



WELL, SURE, THANK

SURE HAVE NOTICED  
A LOT OF YOU ALFAS  
IN TOWN.

YEAH, MAN.



RON ROACH

...THIS FUCKIN' HOLE. NEW T.J.,  
ALL THE SHIT IN THE GALAXY  
ENDS UP HERE...BUT THIS IS WHERE  
YOU CATCH THE CHEAP SHIP TO  
ALFA SYSTEM.

OH YEAH?

YEAH, BUT EVERY ALFA IN THIS  
SIDE OF THE GALAXY COMES  
HERE TO CATCH THAT CHEAP  
SHIP—AND IT FILLS UP. IT'S  
ALWAYS FULL, MAN! I CAN'T  
GET ON IT. JUST LIKE THE  
OTHER THREE HUNDRED  
ALFAS.

YEAH, IT'S TUFF

SO I WAIT  
SIX MONTHS  
—AND MY  
MONEY RUNS  
OUT

SHEE-ITT.





HUNGRY, WOW.  
LOOK AT ALL  
THAT FOOD!

BESTEC CRESPIANO  
SLIZOTO YOMERO  
ENKELAD  
PAN LARGO  
159

COMIDA CORRIDA  
PACOS  
GRILLOS  
ENKELAD  
POMES  
FAYOS  
BOLLOS

POLLO DE  
MARTEL'S  
PACOS  
GRILLOS  
ENKELAD  
POMES  
FAYOS  
BOLLOS  
20.4

'CRESPIAN CELER STEAKS,  
BAKED SLIZOT WITH CREAM  
CHEESE, SALAD AND LONG  
BREAD... FIFTEEN SOLARS.'  
...SHIT, WISH I HAD FIVE  
SOLARS FOR A BOWL OF  
THLUP, EVEN.

I GUESS THERE'S NOTHING TO DO  
BUT GO TO THE PORT AND TRY  
THE SHIPS

I HOPE THERE'S A GOOD  
GUARD ON DUTY TODAY,  
I HAVEN'T GOT ANYTHING  
TO BRIBE MY WAY IN  
WITH.

PUSE

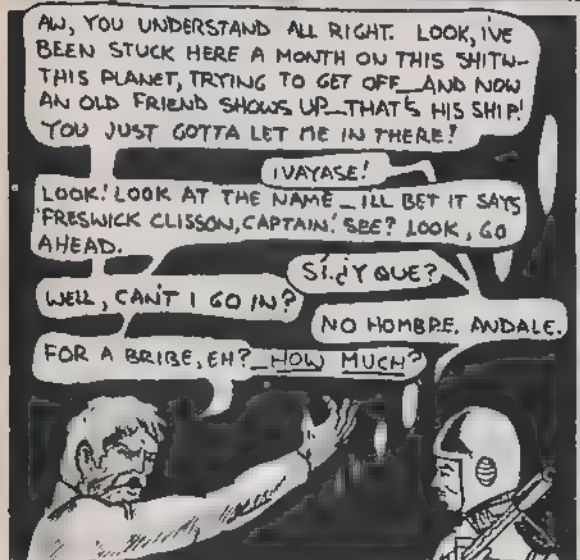
UNHOLSTERY



NO ENTRADA SIN  
PAPELES!

OH...AH...BUT I'M SUPPOSED  
TO MEET SOME PEOPLE IN  
THERE!

NO



AW, YOU UNDERSTAND ALL RIGHT. LOOK, I'VE  
BEEN STUCK HERE A MONTH ON THIS SHIT—  
THIS PLANET, TRYING TO GET OFF—AND NOW  
AN OLD FRIEND SHOWS UP—THAT'S HIS SHIP!  
YOU JUST GOTTA LET ME IN THERE!

¡VAYASE!

LOOK! LOOK AT THE NAME—I'LL BET IT SAYS  
'FRESHWICK CLISSON, CAPTAIN.' SEE? LOOK, GO  
AHEAD.

¿Y QUE?

WELL, CAN'T I GO IN?

NO HOMBRE. ANDALE.

FOR A BRIBE, EH? HOW MUCH?



BUT I'VE GOT TO SEE THE  
CAPTAIN OF THE... THE...  
...HEY!... GREAT COSMIC SHIT!  
THE 'THIPDAR' IS HERE! HEY!  
I KNOW THE GUY ON THAT  
SHIP, HE'S AN OLD BUDDY!  
—I GOTTA GET IN.??

NO  
COMPRENDO



WELL, FOR ABOUT  
FIFTY SOLARS... I  
MIGHT SLIP YOU  
THROUGH, SEÑOR.

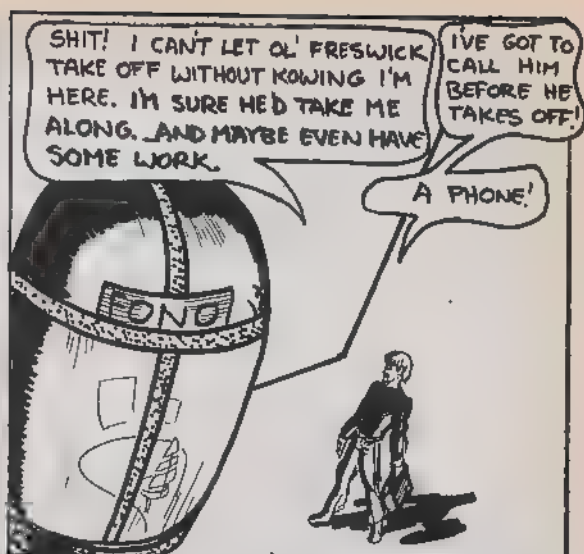




FIFTY? OOH... I COULD OWE IT TO YOU?

NO COMPRENDO

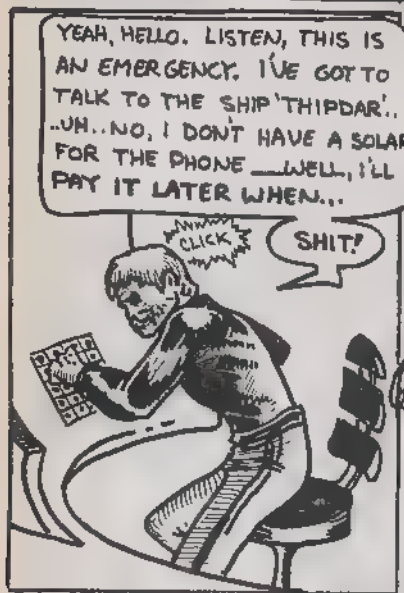
CLICK



SHIT! I CAN'T LET OL' FRESWICK TAKE OFF WITHOUT KNOWING I'M HERE. I'M SURE HE'D TAKE ME ALONG. AND MAYBE EVEN HAVE SOME WORK.

I'VE GOT TO CALL HIM BEFORE HE TAKES OFF!

A PHONE!



YEAH, HELLO. LISTEN, THIS IS AN EMERGENCY. I'VE GOT TO TALK TO THE SHIP 'THIPDAR'.  
...UH... NO, I DON'T HAVE A SOLAR FOR THE PHONE... WELL, I'LL PAY IT LATER WHEN...

CLICK

SHIT!



SPARE CHANGE?

FUCK OFF!



HEY, GOT A SOLAR TO SPARE?

HERE

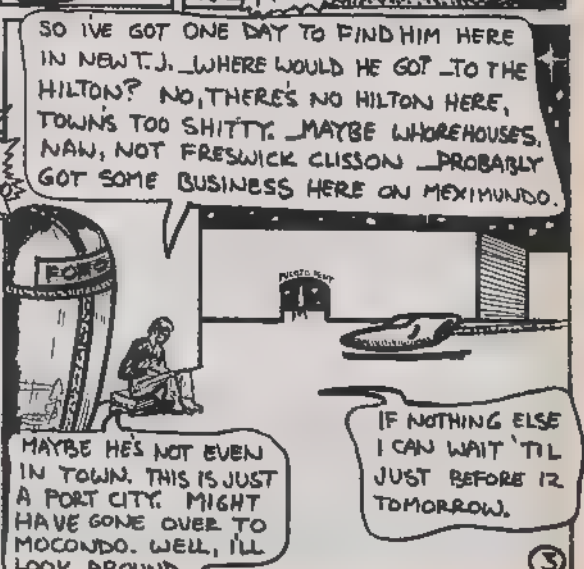
WOWEE! A SOLAR THAT'S ALL I NEEDED!



NO ANSWER. HE'S NOT ON BOARD THE THIPDAR. I'LL TRY SPACEPORT CONTROL

SI SEÑOR, EL THIPDAR IS SCHEDULED TO LIFT OFF TOMORROW AT 1200 HOURS.

YEAH, THANK.



SO I'VE GOT ONE DAY TO FIND HIM HERE IN NEW T.J. WHERE WOULD HE GOT TO THE HILTON? NO, THERE'S NO HILTON HERE, TOWN'S TOO SHITTY. MAYBE WHOREHOUSES. NAW, NOT FRESWICK CUSSON. PROBABLY GOT SOME BUSINESS HERE ON MEXIMUNDO.

MAYBE HE'S NOT EVEN IN TOWN. THIS IS JUST A PORT CITY. MIGHT HAVE GONE OVER TO MOCONDO. WELL, I'LL LOOK AROUND.

IF NOTHING ELSE I CAN WAIT 'TIL JUST BEFORE 12 TOMORROW.



BUT I'M HUNGRY RIGHT NOW. AND CLISSON WOULD HAVE LOTS OF SOLARS ON HIM. IF I FOUND HIM, I COULD EAT.

I'LL HITCH TO THE CENTER OF TOWN.

PUERTO DE L'ARAC

COME ON, SOMEONE!

GOD, HOW LONG IS THIS GOING TO TAKE?

AH

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

TO THE CENTER OF TOWN.

GOD, SHE'S BEAUTIFUL! MAYBE I SHOULDN'T LOOK FOR OL' FRE'S TONIGHT AFTER ALL... MAYBE THIS WONDEROUS WOMAN WILL LIKE ME AND TAKE ME HOME WITH HER!

I'D LIKE THAT. LOOK AT THAT BODY. JUST FINE, FINE.

WE COULD SCREW ALL NIGHT. MAYBE SHE WOULD EVEN FEED ME. IT'S SURE BEEN A LONG TIME. I HOPE SHE SAYS,....

MAYBE I SHOULD START A CONVERSATION. BUT SHIT—I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING TO SAY.

NICE VIEW.

YES.

SHE DOESN'T SEEM INTERESTED, BUT THEN, WHY SHOULD SHE BE? I'M RAGGED AND DIRTY. I EVEN STINK. I HAVEN'T HAD A ROOM OR A BATH FOR FOUR DAYS.

NO BED, NO SHOWER, NO CHANGE OF CLOTHES. GOD, SHE MUST BE REPULSED BY ME! I DON'T BLAME HER.

HERE WE ARE. ANY PLACE IN PARTICULAR?

NO. ANYWHERE HERE IS FINE, THANK YOU.

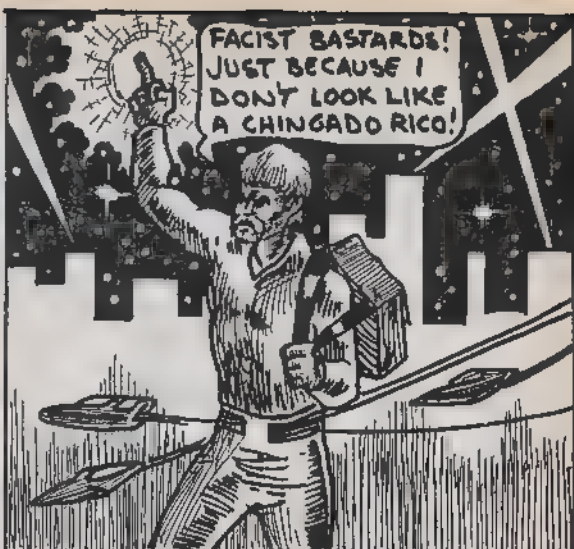
NUTS! WHERE'S MY OLD NERVE? I COULD HAVE ASKED

MAYBE I CAN GET CLEANED UP AND FIND THAT GIRL AGAIN.

SIGH! SHE WAS SO NEAT

AH, WELL. I'D BETTER FIND FRESHWICK, I GUESS!







IM FROM STORVERDEN  
-THAT'S CALLON II,  
IT'S A FARMWORLD...

THIS IS GREAT  
STUFF IM  
DRINKIN':  
-AN' I  
FEEL  
LIKE  
A FIGHT!  
-AHM!

GUESS THAT  
MEANS YOR'  
A FUCKIN'  
FARMER.  
HAW!

HEY, LOOK 'ERE,  
WHYNEHA JUS'  
FUCK OFF?

SHUT YOR' HOLE,  
CRESPIAN. YOU  
TALK BORGSHIT.

YOU CANT TALK TO  
A CRESPIAN LIKE  
THAT, YOU ORUL-  
LAN FWERK!

OH NO?

CRESPIANS AINT SHIT  
AGAINST ORULLANS-  
THE BEST AND  
STRONGEST  
FIGHTERS IN  
THE GALAXY.  
-TAKE  
THIS!

KA-000F

HAWHAW NO SWEAT!  
MAYBE ILL JUST  
STOMP HIM A  
LITTLE, TOO.

HOLD IT,  
PIGFUCKER!

EH?

WHAT ABOUT ME?

HAW -A FARMER? YOU  
WOULDN'T STAND AS  
LONG AS HE DID, KID-  
I'M AN ORULLAN!

YEAH, WELL, YOU DONT  
KNOW ALL ABOUT IT,  
DO YOU? -IT WAS A  
FARMWORLD COLONY  
ALL RIGHT, BUT

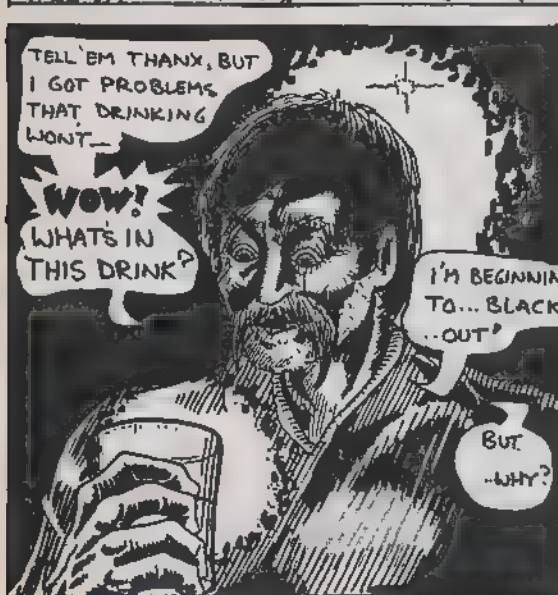
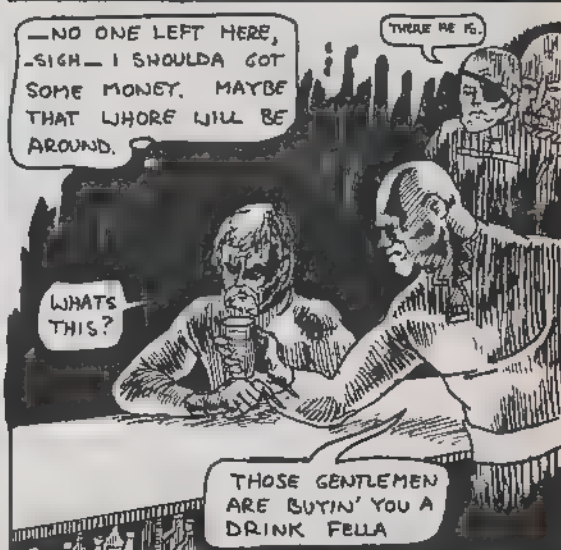
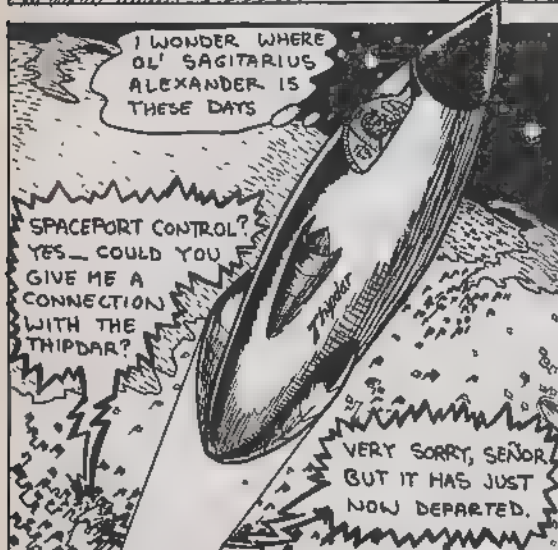
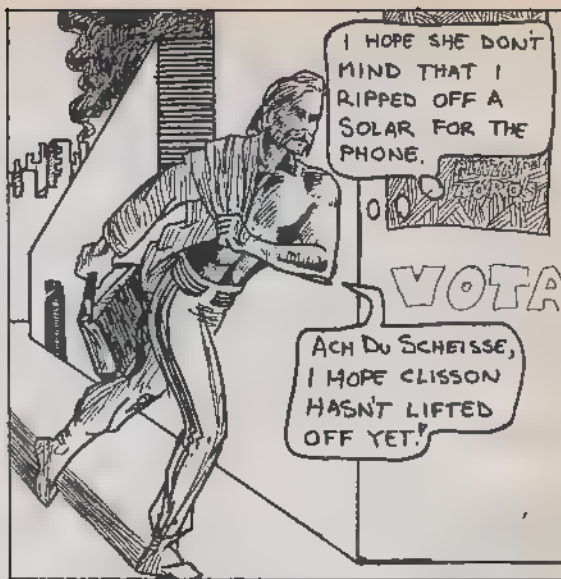
-IT WAS A HEAVY G  
FARMWORLD... I WAS  
BORN AND RAISED  
UNDER THREE POINT  
FIVE GRAVITIES...

...So...

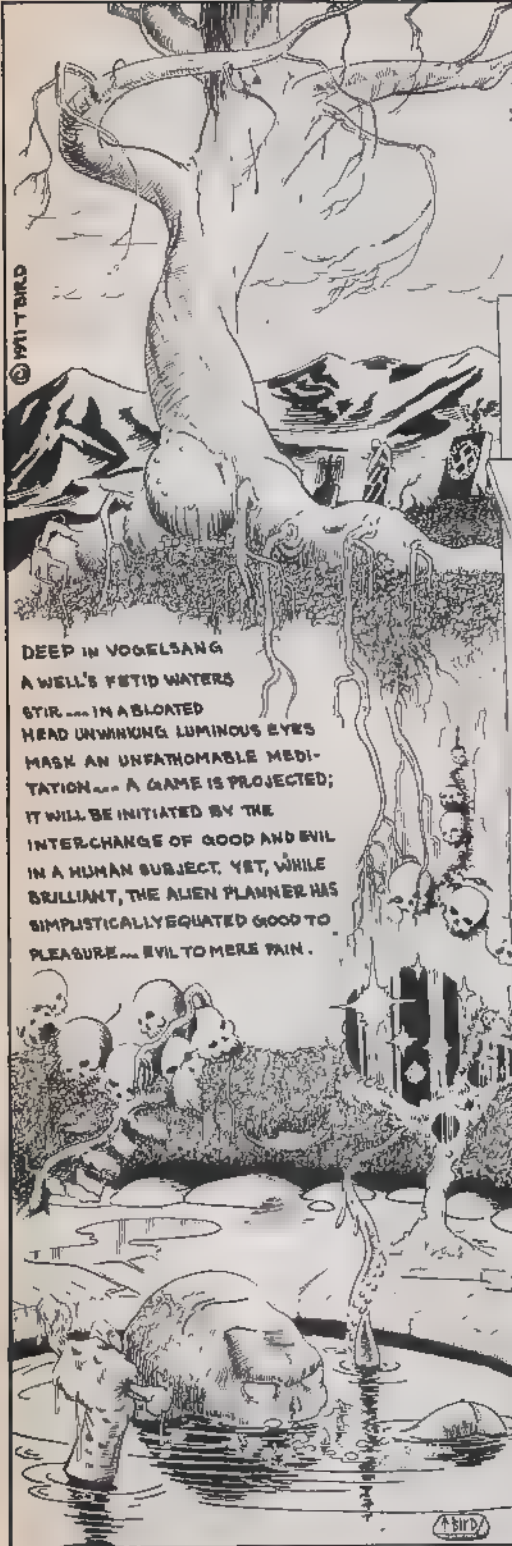










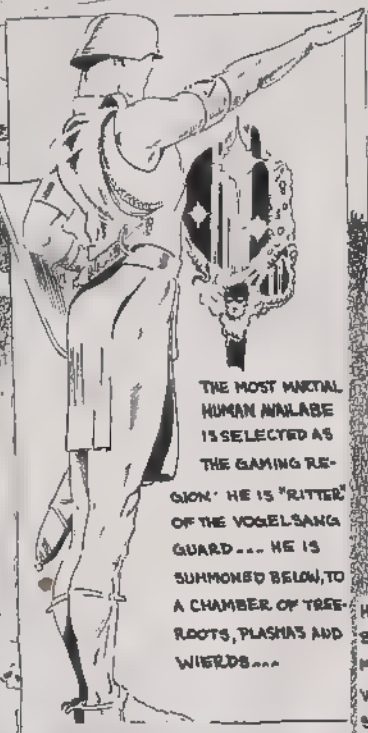


© WITBIRD

DEEP IN VOGELSANG  
A WELL'S FETID WATERS  
STIR... IN A BLOATED  
HEAD UNWINKING LUMINOUS EYES  
MASK AN UNFATHOMABLE MEDI-  
TATION... A GAME IS PROJECTED;  
IT WILL BE INITIATED BY THE  
INTERCHANGE OF GOOD AND EVIL  
IN A HUMAN SUBJECT. YET, WHILE  
BRILLIANT, THE ALIEN PLANNER HAS  
SIMPLISTICALLY EQUATED GOOD TO  
PLEASURE... EVIL TO MERE PAIN.

OH, MEN SAY AN EVIL TREE GROWS IN VOGELSANG~  
THAT A CHARNEL WIND SPLAYS ITS BRANCHES AND SENDS  
THEM CREAKING AND MOANING WITH THE WEIGHT OF  
STRANGE FRUIT... THE TREE'S ROOTS FORM AS-  
CESSED CAVERNS WHERE VOGELSANG'S DARK  
LORDS DWELL AND PLAY AT GAMES OF COSMIC  
FEAR... GAMES...

# OF GOOD AND EVIL



THE MOST MENTAL  
HUMAN AVAILABLE  
IS SELECTED AS  
THE GAMING RE-  
GION. HE IS "RITTER"  
OF THE VOGELSANG  
GUARD... HE IS  
SUMMONED BELOW TO  
A CHAMBER OF TREE-  
ROOTS, PLASMAS AND  
WIERDS...



HE WILL BE THRUST INTO THE WORLD  
BEYOND VOGELSANG TO DESTROY AND  
MURDER... ILLUSION IS THE KEY THAT  
WILL RID HIM OF THE "PAIN" OF CON-  
SCIENCE, HIS MIND IS TAMPERED WITH.



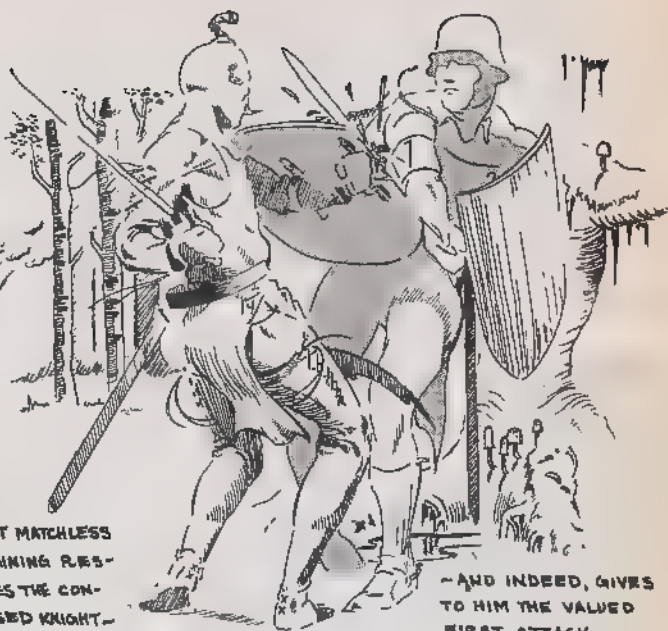
UPON AWAKENING  
HE KNEW NEITHER  
HIS NAME NOR LO-  
CATION... NOR THAT  
A FIGURE APPROACHED.

WITBIRD





THUS A BAU-RITTER, GARBED IN LEATHER AND STEEL, HIS TOP-KNOT COILED IN THE CHALLENGERS MODE, PERCEIVED EASY PREY FOR HIS GLITTERING BLADE.



BUT MATCHLESS TRAINING RESCUES THE CONFUSED KNIGHT—

—AND INDEED, GIVES TO HIM THE VALUED FIRST ATTACK...



THOROUGHLY SHAKEN BY THE BRUTAL POWER OF THE STRANGE KNIGHT'S ASSAULT, THE BAU-RITTER KNEW A VIRTUALLY SUPERSTITIOUS AWE...



HE SOUGHT FRANTICALLY TO PLEA FOR HIS LIFE. "QUARTER!" HE SHRIEKED, "QUARTER... DAEMON! QUARTER!..."





THE NOW-DESPERATE BAU-RITTER STRIVES TO LAND A BLOW BEFORE HIS INCAUTIOUSLY SELECTED FOEMAN'S STUNNING SPEED LEAVES HIM DEAD! BUT... TOO LATE!

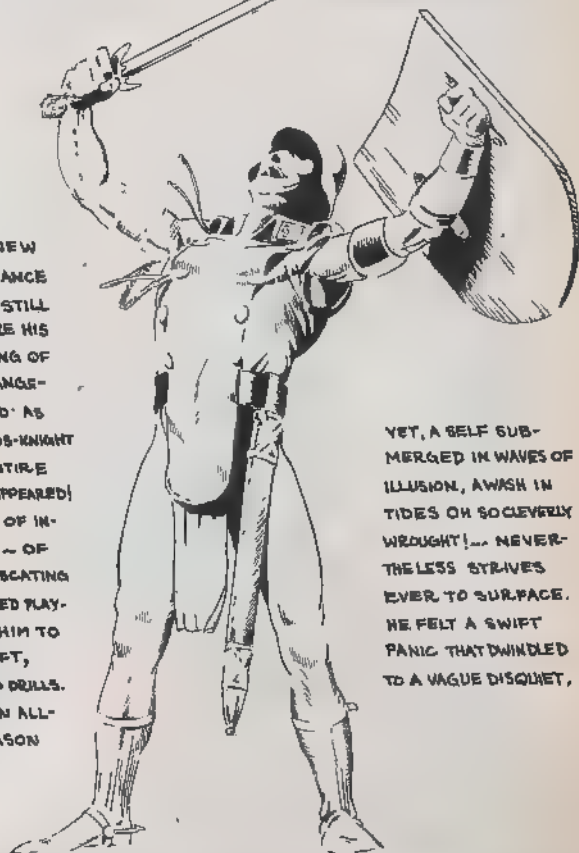
SHOCKED, SHIELD-ARM A-THROB WITH GROWING PAIN~



BUT THE DAEMON-WARRIOR SEEMED IN A TRANCE, SEEMED... ENCHANTED! TERROR-STRIKEN, THE BAU-RITTER STRIVES TO RISE, TO FLEE THIS NIGHT-MARE ~ BUT A HEAVY BLADE ARCS UPWARD... AND FLASHES DOWN!

ECSTASY! HE KNEW ECSTASY IN THE DANCE OF LIGHTS THAT STILL SPARKLED BEFORE HIS EYES... FOR A TRING OF SURPASSING, STRANGENESS HAD OCCURRED! AS THE SNARLING WOODS-KNIGHT ATTACKED, THE ENTIRE WORLD HAD... DISAPPEARED! REPLACED BY ONE OF INFINITE PLEASURE ~ OF SHIFTING, CORRUSCATING FORMS THAT CHIMED PLAYFULLY, INVITING HIM TO A DANCE OF SWIFT, GRACEFUL SWORD DRILLS. HE HAD FOUND AN ALL-EMBRACING REASON FOR BEING.

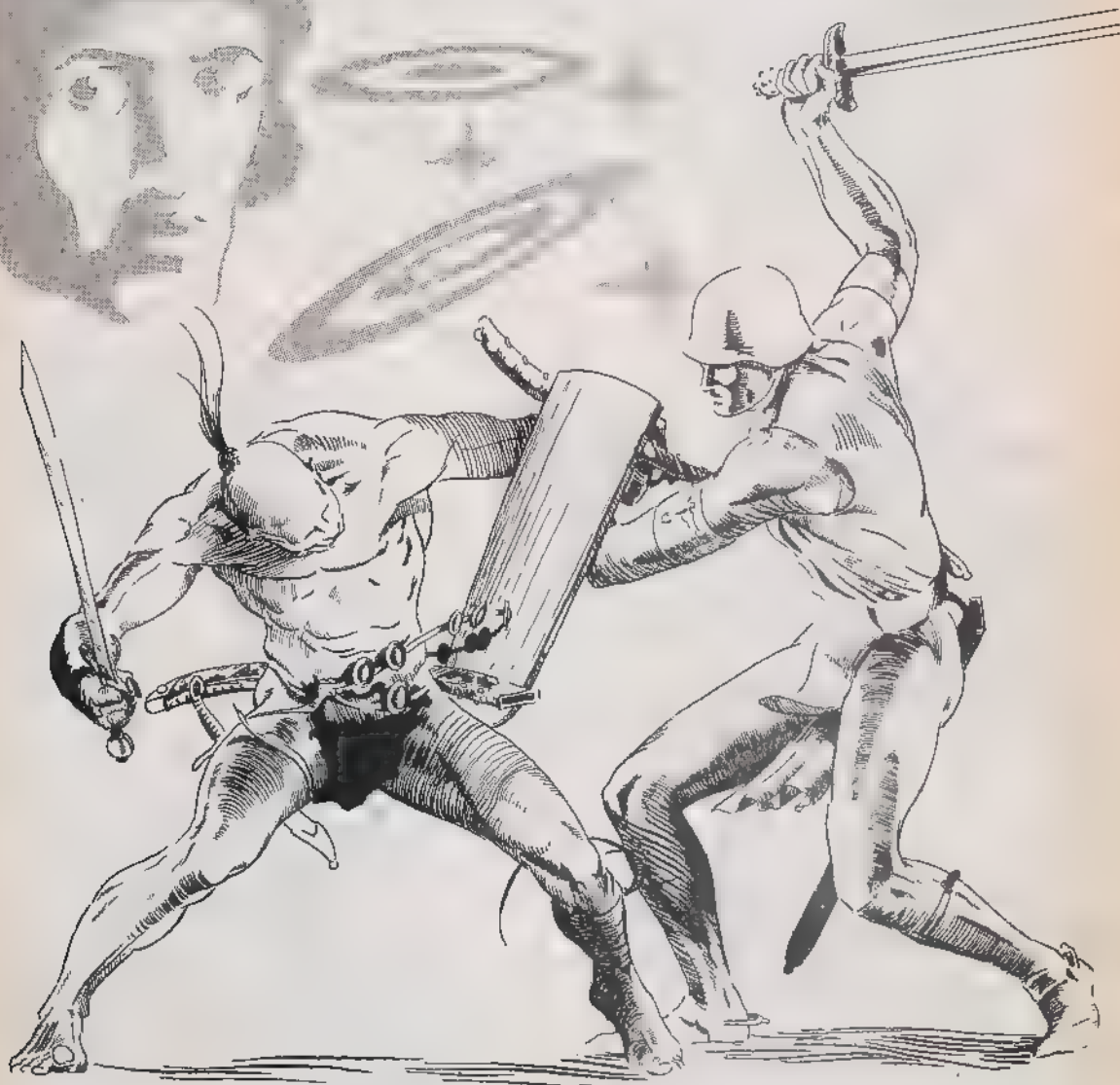
78/86



YET, A SELF SUBMERGED IN WAVES OF ILLUSION, AWASH IN TIDES ON SO CLEVERLY WROUGHT!... NEVERTHELESS STRIVES EVER TO SURFACE. HE FELT A SWIFT PANIC THAT DWINDLED TO A VAGUE DISQUET,



THE LORD OF VOGELSANG WHOSE EXPERIMENT, WHOSE GAME HE WAS GREW SATISFIED. FOR THE HUMAN, IN PERFORMING THE ILLUSION-INDUCED SWORD-DRILLS AND SINUOUS ATTACK SEQUENCES DWELLED AMONG RUSHING SYLLOGISMS OF DESTRUCTION, INHABITED A THEOREM OF DEATH WHOSE RED VALIDITY WAS FOUND IN THE VERY REAL HAVOC BEING WROUGHT. THUS THE WORKS OF THE LORD... A LOGICIAN OF APODICTICAL HORROR, CHANTING CHAOS IN AN UNEARTHLY RHYME. AND THE HUMAN WORLD WAS ROCKED BY TALES OF HE WHO HAD BECOME KNOWN AS THE DAEMON RITTER. AS HIS FAME GREW, SKILLED SWORDSMEN, MIGHTY RITTERS AND BARBARIAN CHAMPIONS FROM DISTANT STEPPES CAME TO TEST THEIR FURIES AGAINST HIS - BUT ALWAYS IT WAS THE SAME: SWIFT DEFEAT AND DEATH. FOR THE DAEMON-RITTER DID NOT GIVE QUARTER - EVER! HE DID NOT HEED THE BANS OF KNIGHTLY COMBAT... INDEED, HIS ARTISTRY WITH SWORD AND SHIELD WOULD HAVE WON HIM A PLACE IN COUNTLESS BARDIC SONGS WERE IT NOT FOR HIS OUTRAGEOUS DISREGARD FOR THE CODES OF THE DAY. HE ATTACKED ANYONE - FARMERS, WOMEN, CHILDREN... THUS HE BECAME NOT A HERO, BUT A FEARED KILLER.





HIS EXPRESSION CURIOUSLY REMOTE, HE WOULD  
AWAIT WAYFARERS ALONG LEAFY FOREST PATHS,  
HAILING THEM EAGERLY UPON THEIR APPROACH...



... AND THEN, HIS  
SWORD AT READY,  
HE WOULD ADVANCE  
IN ECSTASY BEATITUDE

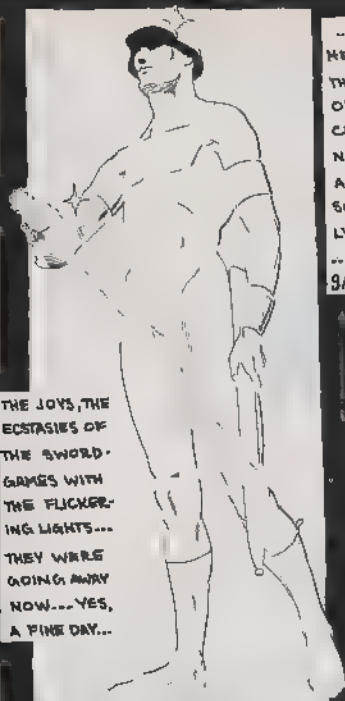


HE WAS A WHIRLWIND! AN AVATAR  
OF A GOD OF GORE - AND THROUGH-  
OUT IT ALL HE WAS JUBILANT!... EX-  
CEPT... THERE SEEMED TO BE ... ?



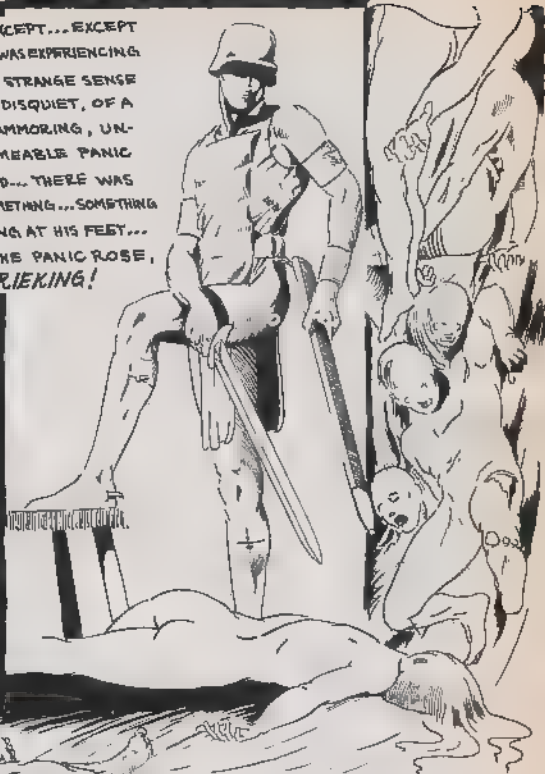


IT...  
HAD  
BEEN  
A DAY  
LIKE  
MANY  
OTHERS  
..

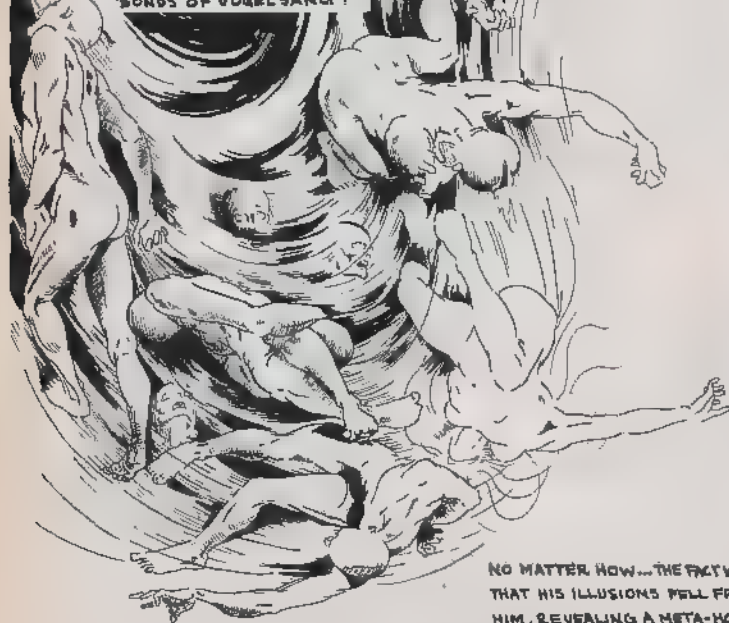


THE JOYS, THE  
ECSTASIES OF  
THE SWORD-  
GAMES WITH  
THE FLICKER-  
ING LIGHTS...  
THEY WERE  
GOING AWAY  
NOW... YES,  
A FINE DAY...

...EXCEPT... EXCEPT  
HE WAS EXPERIENCING  
THE STRANGE SENSE  
OF DISQUIET, OF A  
CLAMMORING, UN-  
NAMEABLE PANIC  
AND... THERE WAS  
SOMETHING... SOMETHING  
LYING AT HIS FEET...  
...THE PANIC ROSE,  
SHRIEKING!



WAS IT HIS OWN HUMANITY THAT HAD  
SOMEHOW ALWAYS KNOWN THE TRUTH  
... KNOWN THE UNSPEAKABLE REVULSION  
OF A MIND THAT HAD BEEN INTER-  
FERED WITH... KNOWN, GAGGING,  
THE ENDLESS SLAUGHTER AND FI-  
NALLY, STRENGTHENED BY OUTRAGE  
UPON OUTRAGE BROKEN THE  
BONDS OF VOGEL SANG?



NO MATTER HOW... THE FACT WAS  
THAT HIS ILLUSIONS FELL FROM  
HIM, REVEALING A META-HORROR.





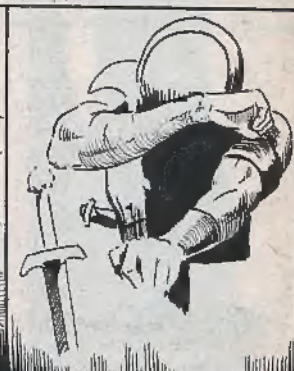
HE STOOD CON-  
SCIOUS OF HIS  
ACTS, FROZEN  
AND MUTE...  
BEFORE HIS  
OWN HISTORY.



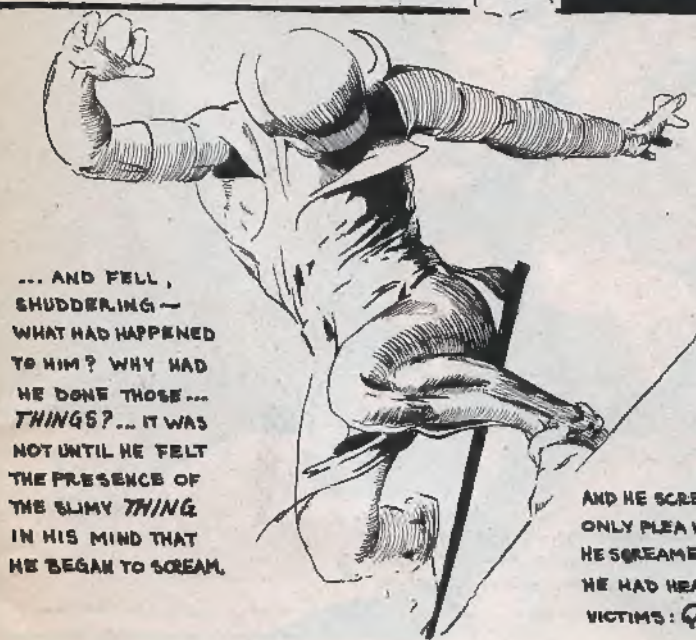
HE RAISED  
HIS SWORD  
TO SMITE THE  
AWFUL TRUTH,



--BUT HIS HAND WAS  
BRAKED BY A WILL  
THAT COULD NO LONGER  
COUNTEANCE FALSEHOOD



HE MUST CONFRONT  
THE... BUT GODS!  
THE PAIN! HE  
REELED, STAGGERED..



... AND FELL,  
SHUDDERING--  
WHAT HAD HAPPENED  
TO HIM? WHY HAD  
HE DONE THOSE...  
THINGS?... IT WAS  
NOT UNTIL HE FELT  
THE PRESENCE OF  
THE SLIMY *THING*  
IN HIS MIND THAT  
HE BEGAN TO SCREAM.



AND HE SCREAMED THE  
ONLY PLEA HE KNEW;  
HE SCREAMED OVER AND OVER THAT WHICH  
HE HAD HEARD FROM COUNTLESS TORTURED  
VICTIMS: *QUARTER! DAEMON!... QUARTER!!*





LONG AND LONG HE  
SAT AND THOUGHT WHEN THE GULPING SCREAMS HAD STOPPED ---MORE  
NAKED AND ALONE NOW THAN ANY MAN ---WHAT COULD HE DO?



AND HE KNEW.  
OH, DAEMON-  
RITTER ---



IN MOULDY TOMES AND UPON  
RAGGED SCROLLS METAPHY-  
SICIANS QUERY ONE ANOTHER  
THUSLY: "WHAT IS A PERSON?"  
-HUMAN LOGICIANS, ADMITTING  
THAT THEIR CRISP SYMBOLS  
ARE BALKED BY THE PARADOX,  
SAY PETTISHLY THAT ONLY  
PSEUDO-PROBLEMS ARE GEN-  
ERATED BY SUCH WONDERING.  
-YET IN VOGELSANG,  
WEITHING IN A WELL, THERE  
RAGES A LOGICIAN; SCALED  
AND WEB-FINGERED, ALIEN  
AND REMOTE FROM HUMANITY...  
...WHOSE PROBLEM IS VERY REAL.

OH MEN SAY AN EVIL TREE  
GROWS IN VOGELSANG--THAT  
A CHARNEL WIND SPLAYS ITS  
BRANCHES AND SENDS THEM  
CREAKING AND MOANING WITH  
THE WEIGHT OF STRANGE FRUIT  
---





